THE

ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

A MAGAZINE OF LITERATURE, ART, AND POLITICS.

VOL. II.—OCTOBER, 1858.—NO. XII.

THE NEW WORLD AND THE NEW MAN.

HALF a dozen rivulets leap down the western declivity of the Rocky Mountains, and unite; four thousand miles away the mighty Missouri debouches into the Mexican Gulf as the result of that junction. Did the rivulets propose or plan the river? Not at all; but they knew, each, its private need to find a lower level; the universal law they obeyed accomplished the rest. So is it with the great human streams. Mighty beginnings do not lie in the minds of the beginners. History is a perpetual surprise, ever developing results of which men were the agents without being the expectants. Individual actors, with respect to the master claim of humanity, are, for the most part, not unlike that fleet hound which, enticed by a tempting prospect of meat, outran a locomotive engine all the way from Lowell to Boston, and won a handsome wager for his owner, while intent only on a dinner for himself. Humanity is served out of all proportion to the intention of service. Even the noble souls, never wanting in history, who follow not a bait, but belief, see only in imperfect survey the connections and relations of their deeds. Each is faithfully obeying his own inward vocation, a voice unheard by other soul than his own, and the inability to calculate consequences makes the preëminent grandeur of his position; or he is urged by the high inevitable impulse to publish or verify an idea: the Divine Destiny *works* in their hearts, and *plans* over their heads.

Socrates felt a sacred impulse to test his neighbors, what they knew and were: this is such account of his life as he himself can give at its close. His contemporaries generally saw in him an imperturbable and troublesome questioner, fatally sure to come at the secret of every man's character and credence, whom no subterfuge could elude, no compliments flatter, no menaces appall,—suspected also of some emancipation from the popular superstitions: this is the account of him which *they* are able to give. At twenty-three centuries' distance *we* see in him the source of a river of spiritual influence, that yet streams on, more than a Missouri, in the minds of men,—more than a Missouri, for it not only flows as an open current, but, percolating beneath the surface, and coming up in distinct and distant fountains, it becomes the hidden source of many a constant tide in the faiths and philosophies of nations.

The veil covers the eyes of spectators

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and agents alike. Columbus returns, freighted with wondrous tidings, to the Spanish shore; the nation rises and claps its hands; the nation kneels to bless its gods at all its shrines, and chants its delight in many a choral Te Deum. What, then, do they think is gained? Why, El Dorado! Have they not gained a whole world of gold and silver mines to buy jewelled cloaks and feathers and frippery with? Have they not gained a cornucopia of savages, to support new brigades at home by their enslavement, and new bishoprics abroad by their salvation? Touching, truly, is the childish eagerness and *bonhommie* with which those Spaniards in fancy assume, as it were, between thumb and finger, this continent, deemed to be nothing less than gold, and feed with it the leanness of hungry purses; and the effect is not a little enhanced by the extreme pains they are at to say a sufficient grace over the imagined meal. "Oh, wonderful, Pomponius!" shouts the large-minded Peter Martyr. "Upon the surface of that earth are found rude masses of gold, of a weight that one fears to mention! . . . Spain is spreading her wings," etc. He is of the minority there, who does not suppose this New World a Providential donation to aid him to dinners, dances, and dawdling, or at best to promote his "glory" and pride of social estimation. Even Columbus, more magnanimous than most of his contemporaries, is not so greatly more wise. The noblest use he can conceive for his discovery is to aid in the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. With the precious metals that should fall to his share, says his biographer, he made haste to vow the raising of a force of five thousand horse and fifty thousand foot for the expulsion of the Saracens from Jerusalem. Nor is this the only instance in which even the noble among men have sought to clutch the grand opening futures, and wreathe the beauty of their promise about the consecrated graves of the past. "Servants of Sepulchres" is a title which even now, not individuals alone, but whole nations, may lawfully claim.

The Old World, we say, seized upon this magnificent new force now thrown into history, and harnessed it unsuspiciously to its own car, as if it could have been designed for no other possible use. Happily, however, the design was different, and Providence having a peculiar faculty of protecting its own plans, the holding of the reins after such a steed proved anything but a sinecure. Spain, indeed, rode in a high chariot for a time, but at length, in that unlucky Armada drive, crashed against English oak on the ocean highways, and came off creaking and rickety, — grew thenceforth ever more unsteady,—finally, came utterly to the ground, with contusions, fractures, and much mishap, — and now the poor nation hobbles hypochondriacally upon crutches, all its brave charioteering sadly ended. England drove more considerately, but could not avoid fate; so in 1783 she, too, must let go the rein with some mental disturbance. For the great Destiny was not exclusively a European Providence, — had meditated the establishment of a fresh and independent human centre on the western side of the sea. The excellent citizens of London and Madrid found themselves incapable of crediting this until it was duly placarded in gunpowder print.—It is, indeed, an unaccountable foible men have, not to recognize a plain fact till it has been published in this blazing hieroglyphic. What were England and France doing at Sebastopol? Merely issuing a poster to this effect, — "Turkey is not yours,"—in a type that Russia could feel free to understand. Terribly costly editions these are, and in a type utterly hideous; but while nations refuse to see the fact in a more agreeable presentation, it may probably feel compelled to go into this ugly, but indubitable shape. —Well, somewhat less than a century since, England had committed herself to the proposition, that America was really a part or dependency of Europe, a lower-caste Europe, having about the same relation to the Cisatlantic continent that the farmer's barn has to his house. Mild

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

refutations of this modest doctrine having been attempted without success, posters in the necessary red-letter type were issued at Concord, Bunker Hill, Yorktown, etc., which might be translated somewhat thus:—"America has its own independent root in the world's centre, its own independent destiny in the Providential thought." This important fact, having then and there exploded itself into legibility, and come to be known and read of all men, admits now of no dispute, and requires no confirmation. It is evidently so. The New World is not merely a newly-discovered hay-loft and dairy-stall for the Old, but is itself a proper household, of equal dignity with any. To draw the due inferences from this, to see what is implied in it, is all that we are here required to do.

Be it, then, especially noted that the continent by itself can take no such rank. A spirituality must appear to crown and complete this great continental body; otherwise America is acephalous. Unless there be an American Man, the continent is inevitably but an appendage, a kitchen and laundry for the European parlor. American Man,—and the word Man is to receive a large emphasis. Observe, that it does not refer to mere population. The fact required will hardly be reported in the census. Indeed, there is quite too much talk about population, about prospective increase of numbers. We are to have thirty millions of inhabitants, they say, in 1860; soon forty, fifty, one hundred millions. Doubtless; and if that be all, one yawns over the statement. Could any prophet assure us of *one* million of men who would stand for the broadest justice as Leonidas and his three hundred Spartans stood for Lacedæmon! But Hebrew David was thought to be punished for taking a census; nor is the story without significance. To reckon numbers alone a success *is* a sin, and a blunder beside. Russia has sixty millions of people: who would not gladly swap her out of the world for glorious little Greece back again, and Plato and Æschylus and Epaminondas still there? Who would exchange Concord or Cambridge in Massachusetts for any hundred thousand square miles of slave-breeding dead-level? Who Massachusetts in whole for as many South American (or Southern) republics as would cover Saturn and all his moons? Make sure of depth and breadth of soul as the national characteristic; then roll up the census columns; and roll out a hallelujah for each additional thousand.

Thus had the great Genoese been destined merely to make a new highway on the ocean and new lines on the map,—to add the potato, maize, and tapioca to the known list of edibles, and tobacco to that of narcotics,—to explode Spain, give England a cotton-field, Ireland a hospital, and Africa a hell. This could by no means seem sufficient. The crew of the Pinta shouted, "Land! Land!"—peering through the dark at the new shores; the Spanish nation chanted, "Gold! Gold!"—gazing out through murky desires toward the wondrous West; but it is only with the cry of "Man! Man!" as at the sight of new cerebral shores and wealth of more than golden humanities, that the true America is discovered and announced. So whatever reason we have to assert for America a really independent existence and destiny, the same have we for predicting an opulence of heart and brain, to which Western prairies and Californian gold shall seem the natural appurtenance.

And this noble man must be likewise a *new* man,—not merely a migrated European. Western Europe pushed a little farther west does not meet our demand. Why should Europe go three thousand miles off to be Europe still? Besides, can we afford to England, France, Spain, a larger room in the world? Are we more than satisfied with their occupancy of that they already possess? The Englishman is undeniably a wholesome picture to the mental eye; but will not twenty million copies of him do, for the present? It would seem like a poverty in Nature, were she unable to vary, but must go helplessly on to reproduce that selfsame British likeness over all North

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

America. But history fully warrants the expectation of a new form of man for the new continent. German and Scandinavian Teutons peopled England; but the Englishman is *sui generis*, not merely an exported Teuton. Egypt, says Bunsen, was peopled by a colony from Western Asia; but the genius and physiognomy of Egypt are peculiar and its own. Mr. Pococke will have it that Greece was a migrated India: it was, of course, a migration from some place that first planted the Hellenic stock in Europe; but if the man who carved the Zeus, and built the Parthenon, and wrote the "Prometheus" and the "Phædrus," were a copy, where shall we find the original? Indeed, there has never been a great migration that did not result in a new form of national genius. And it is the thoroughness of the transformations thus induced which makes the chief difficulty in tracing the affinities of peoples.

So it is that the world is enriched. Every new form of man establishes another current in those reciprocations of thought, in those electrical streams of sympathy,—of wholesome attraction and wholesome repulsion,—by which the intellectual life is kindled and quickened. Thought begins not until two men meet. Col. Hamilton Smith makes it quite clear that civilization has found its first centres there where two highways of national movement crossed, and dissimilar men looked each other in the face. They have met, it may be, with the rudest kind of greetings; but have obtained good thoughts from hard blows, and beaten ideas *out* of each other's heads, if not *into* them, according to the ancient pedagogic tradition. Higher culture brings higher terms of meeting; traffic succeeds war, conversation follows upon traffic; ever the necessity of various men to each other remains. There is no pure white light until seven colors blend; so to the mental illumination of humanity many hues of national genius must consent: and the value of life to all men is greater so soon as a new man has made his advent.

All this is matter of daily experience with us. We do not, indeed, tire of old friends. A soul whose wealth we have once recognized must be ever rich to us. Gold turns not to copper by keeping; and perhaps old friends are rather like old wine, and can never be too old. Yet who does not mark in the calendar those days wherein he has met a *new* rich soul, that has a physiognomy, a grace and expression, peculiarly its own? Even decided repulsions have also a use. We whet our conscience on our neighbors' faults, as sober Spartans were made by the spectacle of drunken Helots;—though he who makes habitual *talk* about his neighbors' faults whets his conscience across the edge. If there be sermons in stones, no less is there blessing in bores and in bullies. We found one day in the face of a black bear what could not be so well found in libraries. The creature regarded us attentively, and with affection rather than malice,—saw simply certain amounts of savory flesh, useful for the satisfaction of ursine hungers,—and saw nothing more. It was an incomparable lesson to teach that the world is an endless series of levels, and that each eye sees what its own altitude commands; the rest to it is non-extant. *That* bear was in his natural covering of hair; his brothers we frequently meet in broadcloth.

Now, as Nature keeps up this inexhaustible variety of individual genius which individual quickening requires, so on the larger scale is she ever working and compounding to produce varieties of national genius. Her aim is the same in both cases,—to enrich the whole by this electrical and enlivening relation between its parts. And thus an American man, no copy, but an original, formed in unprecedented moulds, with his own unborrowed grandeur, his own piquancy and charm, is to be looked for,—is, indeed, even now to be seen,—on this shore.

Yes, the man we seek is already found, his features rapidly becoming distinct. He is the offspring of Northern Europe; he occupies Central North-America. Other fresh forms are doubtless to appear, but, though dimly shaping themselves, are as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

yet inchoate. But the Anglo-American is an existing fact, to be spoken of without prognostication, save as this is implied in the recognition of tendencies established and unfolding into results. The Anglo-American may be considered the latest new-comer into this planet. Let us, then, a little celebrate his advent. Let us make all lawful and gentle inquiry about the distinguished stranger.

First, what is his pedigree? He need not be ashamed to tell; for he comes of a noble family, the Teutonic,—a family more opulent of human abilities, and those, for the most part, the deeper kind of abilities, than any other on the earth at present. He reckons among his progenitors and relatives such names as Shakspeare, Goethe, Milton, the two Bacons, Lessing, Richter, Schiller, Carlyle, Hegel, Luther, Behmen, Swedenborg, Gustavus Adolphus, William of Orange, Cromwell, Frederick II., Wellington, Newton, Leibnitz, Humboldt, Beethoven, Handel, Turner; and nations might be enriched out of the names that remain when the supreme ones in each class have been mentioned. Consider what incomparable range and variety, as well as depth, of genius are here affirmed. Greece and India possessed powers not equally represented here; but otherwise these might stand for the full abilities of mankind, each in its handsomest illustration. — It is remarkable, too, that our Anglo-American has no "poor relations." Not a scurvy nation comes of this stock. They are the Protestant nations, giving religion a moral expression, and reconciling it with freedom of thought. They are the constitutional nations, exacting terms of government that acknowledge private right. *Resource* may also be emphasized as a characteristic of these nations. Hitherto they have honored every draft that has been made upon them. The Dutch first fished their country out from under the sea, and afterwards defended it in a war of eighty years' duration against the first military power on the globe: two feats, perhaps, equally without parallel.

Being thus satisfied upon the point of pedigree, we may proceed to inquire about estate. To what inheritance of land has Nature invited our New Man? He comes to the country of highest organization, perhaps, upon either hemisphere. Brazil and China suggest, but probably do not sustain, a rivalry. What is implied in superior organization will appear from the items to be mentioned.

1. Elaboration. Central North-America is to an extraordinary degree worked out everywhere in careful detail, in moderate hill and valley, in undulating prairie and fertile plain,—not tossed into barren mountain-masses and table-lands, like that vast desert *plateau* which stretches through Central Asia, — not struck out in blank, like the Russian *steppes* and the South American *llanos*, as if Nature had wanted leisure to elaborate and finish. Indeed, these primary conditions of fertility and large habitability appertain to America, as a whole, to such degree, that, with less than half the extent of the Old World, it actually numbers more acres of fertile soil, and can, of course, sustain a larger population.

2. Unity. Between the Rocky Mountains and the Atlantic coast, and between the Gulf of Mexico and the northern wheat-limit, a larger space of fertile territory, embracing a wider variety of climate and production, is thrown into one mass, broken by no barrier, than can, perhaps, elsewhere be found.

3. Communication. No mass of land equal in other advantages is to the same extent thrown open and enriched by natural highways. The first item under this head is access to the ocean, which is the great road-space and highway of the world. Not mentioning the Pacific, as that coast is not here considered, we have the open sea upon two sides, while upon the northern boundary is an inclosed sea, the string of lakes, occupying a space larger than Great Britain and Ireland, and of a form to afford the greatest amount of coast-line and accommodation in proportion to space. But coast-*line* is not enough; land and sea must be wed-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ded as well as approximated. The Doge of Venice went annually forth to wed the Adriatic in behalf of its queen, and to cast into its bosom the symbolic ring; but Nature alone can really join the hands of ocean and main. By bays, estuaries, ports, spaces of sea lovingly inclosed by arms of sheltering shore, are conversation and union established between them.

"The sea doth wash out all the ills of life," sings Euripides; and it is, indeed, with some penetration of wonder that one observes how deep and productive a relation to man the ocean has sustained. Some share in the greatest enterprises, in the finest results, it seldom fails to have. Not capriciously did the subtile Greek imagination derive the birth of Venus from the foam of the sea; for social love, —that vast reticulation of wedlock which society is—has commonly arisen not far from the ocean-shore. The Persian is the only superior civilization, now occurring to our recollection, which has no intimate relation either with river or sea; and that pushed inevitably toward the Tigris and Euphrates. Now to Europe must be conceded the supremacy in this single respect, that of representing the most intimate coast relation with the sea; North America follows next in order. Africa, washed, but not wedded, by the wave, represents the greatest seclusion,—and has gone into a sable suit in her sorrow.

After the ocean, rivers, which are interior highways, claim regard. The United States have on this side the Rocky Mountains more than forty thousand miles of river-flow, that is, eighty thousand miles of river-bank,—counting no stream of less than one hundred miles in length. Europe, in a larger space, has but seventeen thousand miles. The American rivers are nearly all accessible from the ocean, and, owing to the gentle elevation of the continent, flow at easy declivities, and accordingly are largely navigable. The Mississippi descends at an average of only eight inches *per* mile from source to mouth; the Missouri is said to be navigable to the very base of the Rocky Mountains; and these monarch streams represent the rivers of the continent. Thus here do these highways of God's own making run, as it were, past every man's door, and connect each man with the world he lives in.

Rivers await their due celebration. We easily see that Nile, Ganges, Euphrates, Jordan, Tiber, Thames, are rivers of influence in human history, no less than water-currents on the earth's surface. They have borne barks and barges that the eye never saw. They have brought on their soft bosoms freight to the cities of the brain, as well as to Memphis, Rome, London. Some experience of their spiritual influence must have fallen to the lot of most men. The loved and lovely Merrimac no longer accedes to the writer's eye, but, as of old, glides securely seaward in his thought,—like a strain of masterly music long ago heard, and, when heard, so identical in its suggestions with the total significance and vital progress of one's experience, that, intertwining itself as a twin thread with the shuttled fibre of life, it was woven into the same fabric, and became an inseparable part of the consciousness; so, hearken when one will, after the changes and accessions of many peopled years, and amid the thousand-footed trample of the mob of immediate impressions, still secure and predominant it is heard subtly sounding. Deep conversation with any river readily interprets to us that venerable mythus which connects Eden with the four rivers of the world; as if water must flow where man is chiefly blest.

But the point here to be emphasized is, that rivers are the progressive and public element in its geographical expression. They throw the continent open; they are doors and windows, through which the nations look forth upon the world, and leave and enter their own household. They are the hospitality of the continent, —every river-mouth chanting out over the sea a perpetual "Walk in," to all the world. Or again, they are geographical senses,—eyes, ears, and speech; for of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

these supreme mediators in the body, voice, vision, and hearing, it is the office, as of rivers, to open communication between the interior and exterior world; they are rivers of access to the outlying universe of men and things, which enters them, and approaches the soul through the freighted suggestions of sight and sound. Rivers, lastly, are the geographical symbol of public spirit, the flowing and connecting element, suggesting common interests and large systems of action.

Thus in these characteristics of Various Productiveness, Unity, and Openness or Publicity, the continent indicates the description of man who may be its fit habitant. It suggests a nation vast in numbers and in power, existing not as an aggregate of fragments, but as an organic unit, the vital spirit of the whole prevailing in each of its parts; and consequently predicts a man suitable for wide and yet intimate societies. Let us not, however, thoughtlessly jump to accept these easy prognostics; first let it be fully understood what an enormous demand they imply. Americans speak complacently of their prospective one hundred millions of inhabitants; but do they bear well in mind that the requisition upon the individual is augmented by every multiplication and extension of the mass? It is not without significance, that great empires have uniformly been, or become, despotisms. Liberty lives only in the life of just principle; and as the weight of an elephant could not be sustained by the skeleton of a gazelle,—as, moreover, the bones must be made stouter as well as longer,—so must a vast body politic be permeated by a sturdier element of justice than is required for a diminutive state. It is, indeed, the chief recommendation of our federative form of government, that this, so far as may be, localizes legislation, and thus, by lessening the number of interests that demand a national consent, lessens equally the strain upon the conscience and judgment of the whole. Near at hand, the mere good feeling of neighbors, the companionable sentiment of cities and clans, proves a valuable succedaneum for that deeper principle which is good for all places and times. But this sentiment, like gravitation, diminishes in the ratio of the square of the distance, and at any considerable remove can no longer be reckoned upon as a counter-balance to the lawlessness of egotism. Athenians could be passably just, or at least not disastrously unjust, to Athenians; Spartans to Spartans; but Sparta must needs oppress the other cities of Laconia, while Athens was at best a fickle ally; and when Grecian liberty could be strong only in Grecian union, the common sentiment was bankrupted by too great a draft upon its resources. How far beyond the range of egotism of neighborhood a *free* state may go is determined chiefly by limits in the souls of its constituents. At that point where equal justice begins to halt, fatigued by too long a journey, the inevitable boundaries of the state are fixed. Nor is it the mere sentiment of justice alone that suffices; but this must be sustained in its applications by a certain breadth of nature, a certain freedom and flexibility, akin to the dramatic faculty, which enables us to enter into the feelings and wants of others. Nothing, perhaps, in the world can be so unjust as a narrow and frigid conscience beyond its proper range. The bounds of the state may, indeed, not pause where the sustenance of its integral life fails. But then its extension will be purchased with its freedom,—the quality be debased as the quantity increases. Jelly-fish, and creatures of the lowest animation, may sustain magnitude of body, not only with a slight skeleton, but with none at all; and society of a cold-blooded or bloodless kind follows the analogy. But these low grades of social organization, having some show of congruity with the blank levels of Russia, can pretend to none with the continent we inhabit. Yet some species of arbitrament between man and man is sure to establish itself; if it live not, as a part of freedom, in the bosom of each,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

then does it inevitably build itself into a Fate over their heads; and despotism, war, or similar brutal and violent instrumentalities of adjustment, supply in their way the demand that love and reason failed to meet.

Accordingly, in our American Man must be found, first, social largeness and susceptibility,—whatsoever, in the breadth of a flexile and sympathetic nature, may contribute to the keeping of the Golden Rule. But the broadest good-feeling will not alone suffice. The great pledge of peace, fellowship, and profitable co-working among such a population as we anticipate must be sought in the deeper unity of moral principle. For Right is one, and is every man's interest. Right is better than Charity; for Right meets, or even anticipates, normal wants, while Charity only mends failures. Nothing, therefore, that we could discover in the New Man would be such a security for his future, nothing so fit him for his place, as a tendency to simple and universal principles of action. In the absence of this, he will infallibly be compelled one day to enter Providence's court of chancery, and come forth bankrupt. But let him be, even by promise, a seer of those primary truths in which the interests of all are comprehended and made identical, and the virtue of his vision will become the assurance of his welfare. Doubtless, sad men will say that our own eyes are clouded with some glittering dust of optimism, when we declare that this Man for the Continent is the very one whose advent we celebrate. This might, indeed, seem a fatuitously dulcet song to sing just now, when a din of defection and recreancy is loud through all the land,—now, when we have immediately in view, and on the largest scale, an open patronage of infamous wrong-doing, so brazen-fronted and blush-proof that only the spectacle itself makes its credibility;—the prior possibility of it we should one and all hasten, for the honor of human nature, to deny. Yet in the midst of all this are visible the victorious influences that mould the imported Teuton to the spiritual form which his appointed tasks imply. These we now hasten to indicate.

And first, every breath of American air helps to make him the American Man. The atmosphere of America was early noted as a wonder-worker. Ten years subsequent to the landing at Plymouth, the Rev. Francis Higginson, an acute observer, wrote to the mother country,—"A sup of New England air is better than a whole flagon of old English ale." Jean Paul says that the roots of humankind are the lungs, and that, being rooted in air, we are properly children of the æther. Truly, children of the æther,—and so, children of fire. For the oxygen, upon which the lungs chiefly feed, is *the* fiery principle in Nature,—all that we denominate fire and flame being but the manifestation of its action. We are severe upon fire-eaters, Southern and other; yet here are we, cool Northerns, quaffing this very principle and essence of fire in large lung-draughts every moment, each of us carrying a perpetual furnace in his bosom. Now it is doubtless true that we inhale more oxygen, or at least inhale it less drenched with damp, than the people of Europe, and are, therefore, more emphatically children of fire than they. Be this, or be some other, the true theory of the fact, the fact itself unquestionably is, that our climate produces the highest nervous intensity. As there are conditions of atmosphere in which the magnetic telegraph works well, and others in which it works ill, so some conditions stimulate, while others repress nervous action. The air of England seems favorable to richness and abundance of blood; there the life-vessels sit deep, and bring opulent cargoes to the flesh-shores; and the rotund figure, the ruddy solid cheek, and the leisurely complacent movement, all show how well supported and stored with vital resources the Englishman is. But to the American's lip the great foster-mother has proffered a more pungent and rousing draught,—not an old Saxon sleeping-cup for the night, but a waking-cup for the bright morning and busy day. It is forenoon with him.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He is up and dressed, and at work by the job. Bring an Englishman here, and nothing short of Egyptian modes of preservation will keep him an Englishman long. Soon he cannot digest so much food, cannot dispose of so much stimulant; his step becomes quicker, his eye keener, his voice rises a note on the scale, and grows a trifle sharper. In fine, the effects observed in our autumn foliage may be traced in the people themselves, a heightening of colors; and while this accounts for much that is prurient and bizarre, it infolds also the best promise of America.

The effect of this upon American physiology and physiognomy is already quite visible. Of course we must guard against hasty generalizations, since the interfusing of various elements in our Western States is producing new types of manhood. But the respective *physiques* of Old and New England can easily be compared, and the difference strikes every eye. The American is lean, he has a paler complexion, a sharper face, a slighter build than his ancestors brought from the Old World. Mr. Emerson is reported as saying (though the precise words escape us) that the Englishman speaks from his chest, the American more from the mouth or throat,—that is, the one associates his voice more with the stomach and viscera, the other with the head; and, indeed, the pectoral quality of the prevailing tones catches the ear immediately upon setting foot on British soil. Every man instinctively apprehends where he is strongest, and will tend to associate voice and movement with the centre of his strengths. The American, since in him the nervous force predominates, instinctively lifts his voice into connection with the great household of that force, which is the brain; for an equally good reason the Englishman speaks from the visceral and sanguineous centres. The American (we are still dwelling chiefly on the New England type) is also apt to throw the head forward in walking,—thereby indicating, first, his chief reliance upon the forces which that part harbors, and, secondly, his impulse to progress; so that our national motto, "Go ahead," may have a twofold significance, as if it were in some sort the antipodes of going a-foot, and suggested not only the direction of movement, but also the active agent therein!

Mr. Robert Knox, of England, somewhat known as an ethnological lecturer and author,—a thinker in a sort, though of the "slam-bang" school, of far more force than faculty, and of a singular avidity for ugly news,—dogmatically proclaims that all Americans are undergoing a physical degeneration, involving, as he thinks, an equal lapse of mental power, proceeding with swift fated steps, and sure ere long to land them in sheer impotence and imbecility; and he appeals to the common loss of adipose tissue and avoirdupois as proof. This author belongs to a class of well-meaning gentlemen, so unfortunately constituted that the distractions of their time induce in them an acetous fermentation (as milk sometimes sours during thunder); and from acid becoming acrid, they at length fall fairly in love with the Erinnyes, and henceforth dote upon destruction and ugliness as happier lovers do upon cosmical health and beauty. Concluding that the universe is a shabby affair, they like to make it out shabbier still,—and so, seldom brighten up till they have an ill thing to say. They are not persons toward whom it is easy to feel amiable. Dogmatism is ever unlovely, though it be in behalf of the sweetest hopes; but chronic doubt and disbelief erected into a dogmatism are intolerable. Yet Mr. Knox's misinterpretations of the facts are taking root in many minds that do not share his fierce hypochondria and hunger for bitter herbs. That the American has lost somewhat in animal resources is incontestable; but Mr. Knox's ever-implied premise, "The animal is the man," from which his Jeremiad derives its plaint, is but a provincial paper-currency, of very local estimation, and can never, like gold and silver, pass by weight in the world's marts of thought. The physical constitution of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Man is comparatively delicate and fragile; but as a china vase is not necessarily less sound than a stone jug or iron kettle, so delicacy and fragility in man are no proof of disease. The ominous prognosis of this doctor, therefore, seems no occasion for despair, perhaps not even for alarm. But to perceive what different harping can be performed on this string, hear Carus:—"Leanness, as such," says the master, "is the symbol of a certain lightness, activity, rapidity, and mental power." Thus the adipose impoverishment, which to the yellow-eyed Englishman seems utter bankruptcy, is at once recognized by a superior man as denoting an augmentation, rather than diminution, of proper human wealth.

But while the typical American organization is of this admitted delicacy and lightness, it is still capable, under high and powerful impulse, of extraordinary feats of endurance. This has of late been admirably illustrated. Not long since, there returned to our shores a hero who—as Dante was believed by the people of Italy to have entered the Inferno of Fire—had actually descended into the opposite Inferno of Frost, and done unprecedented battle with the demons of that realm. Dr. Kane was slight, delicately framed, lean, with sharp, clear-cut features, of quivering mobility and fineness of texture, having the aspect rather of an artist than an explorer,—not at all the personage to whom most judges would assign great power of endurance. And as one follows him through those thrice Herculean toils,—sees him not only bearing cheerfully the great burden of his own cares and ills, but lifting up, as it were, from his companions, and assuming upon his own shoulders, the awful oppression of the polar night, as Atlas of old was fabled to support the heavens,—not even one's admiration at such force of soul can wholly exclude wonder at such fortitude of body. Whence, we ask, this power of endurance? We can trace it to no ordinary physical resource. It *comes* from no ordinary physical resource. It is pure brain-power. It streams down upon the body, in rivers of invigoration, from the cerebral hemispheres. A conversational philosopher, discoursing to a circle of intelligent New England mechanics, said,—"It is commonly supposed that the earth supports man. Not so; man upholds the earth!" "How!" exclaimed a wide-eyed auditor; "upholds the earth? How do you make that out?" "How?" answered the philosopher, with superb innocence,—"don't you see that it sticks to his heels?" When the question is asked, How the slight frame of this Arctic hero could support such tests, the answer must be analogous,—It clung to his brain. The usual order of support is reversed; and here is that truer Mercury, in whom the winged head, possessing as function what its prototype only exhibited as ornament and symbol, really soars in its own might, bearing the pendent feet. Dr. Kane was one of the purest examples of the American organization; and as he issued victorious from that region where "the ground burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire," the Man of the New World was represented, and in him came forth with proven strength. The same significance would not attach to all feats of endurance, even where equally representative. Here are Hercules and Orpheus in one,—the organization of a poet, and the physical stamina of a gladiator.

Now this peculiar organization offers the physical inducement for two great tendencies,—one relating to the perception of truth, the other to the feeling of social claims,—while these tendencies are supported on the spiritual side by the great disciplines of our position; and the genius which these foreshow is precisely that which ought to be the genius of the New Man.

This organization is that of the seer, the poet, the spiritualist, of all such as have an eye for the deeper essences and first principles of things. Concede intellectual power, or the spiritual element, then add this temperament, and there follows a certain subtile, penetrative, radical quality of thought, a characteristic

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

percipience of principles. And principles are not only seen, but felt; they thrill the nerve as well as greet the eye; and the man consequently becomes highly amenable to his own belief. The primary question respecting men is this,—How far are they affected by the original axiomatic truths? Truths are like the winds. Near the earth's surface winds blow in variable directions, and the weathercock becomes the type of fickleness. So there is a class of little truths, dependent upon ever-variable relations, with which it is the function of cunning, shrewdness, tact, to deal, and numbers of men seldom or never lift their heads above this weather-cock region. Yet the upper air, alike of the spiritual and the physical atmosphere, has its perpetual currents, unvarying as the revolution of the globe or the sailing of constellations; and these fail not to represent themselves by eternal trade-winds upon the surface of our planet and of our life. Now the grand inquiry about any man is,—Does he belong to the great current, or to the lesser ones? He appertains to the great in proportion to his access to principles. Or we may illustrate by another analogy a distinction of importance so emphatic. The Arctic voyagers find two descriptions of ice. The field-ice spreads over vast spaces, and moves with immense power; but goes with the wind and the surface-flow. The bergs, on the contrary, sit deep, are bedded in the mighty under-currents; and when the field-ice was crashing down with tide and storm, Dr. Kane found these heroes holding their steady inevitable way in the teeth of both. Thus may one discover men who are very massive, very powerful, engrossing such enormous spaces that there hardly seems room in the world for anybody else; but they are Field-ice Men; they represent with gigantic force the impulse of the hour. But there is another class, making, perhaps, little show upon the surface, or making it by altitude alone, who represent the grand circulations of law, the orbital courses of truth. It is a question of depth, of penetration. And depth, be it observed, secures unity; diversity, contrariety, contention are of the surface. Numbers need not concern us, whether one hundred, or one hundred millions, provided all are imbedded in the central, commanding truths of the human consciousness. And if the Man of the New World be characteristically one who will attach himself to the eternal master-tides, that fact alone fits him for his place.

Of course no sane man would intimate that organization alone can bring about such results. The Arabian horse will hardly manufacture a Saladin for his back. But let the Saladin be given, and this marvel of nerve and muscle will multiply his presence,—will, as it were, give two selves. So, if the Teutonic man who comes to our shores were innately empty or mean, this nervous intensity would only ripen his meanness, or make his inanity obstreperous. But in so far as he has real depth of nature, this radical organization will aid him, quickening by its heat what is deepest within him; and when he turns his face toward principles, this flying brain-steed will swiftly bring him to his goal. Nay, it is best that even meanness should ripen. The slaveholder of South Carolina must avouch a false principle to cover his false practice,—must affirm that slavery is a Divine institution. It is well. A Quaker, hearing a fellow blaspheme, said,—"That is right, friend; get such bad stuff out of thee!" A lie is dangerous, till it is told,—like scarlatina, before it is brought to the surface: when either breaks out, it is more than half conquered. The only falsehoods of appalling efficacy for evil are those which circulate subtly in the vital unconsciousness of powerful but obscure or undemonstrative natures,—deadly from the intimacy which also makes them secret and secure, and silently perverting to their own purposes the normal vigors of the system. A Mephistopheles is not dangerous; he is too clear-headed; he knows his own deserts: some muddiness is required to harbor self-deceptions, in order that badness may reach real working power. To all perversion iron

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

limits are, indeed, set; but obscure falsehood works in the largest spaces and with the longest tether.—Thus the expressive intensity which appertains to this organization is serviceable every way, even in what might, at first blush, seem wholly evil effects.

While thus the brain-hand of the American is formed for grasping principles, for apprehending the simple, subtile, universal truths which slip through coarser and more sluggish fingers, there is also an influence on the moral and intellectual faculties, coming in to accept and use these cerebral ones. We are more in conversation with the heart and pure spiritual fact of humanity than any other people of equal power and culture. We necessarily deal more with each other on a bond and basis of common persuasion, of open unenacted truth, than others. This matter is of moment enough to justify somewhat formal elucidation.

Nations, like individual men, birds, and many quadrupeds and fishes, are house-builders. They wall and roof themselves in with symbols, creeds, codes, customs, etiquettes, and the like; they stigmatize by the terms heresy, high-treason, and names of milder import, any attempt to quit this edifice; and send such offenders into purgatory, penitentiary, coventry, as the case may be. Some nations omit to insert either door or window; they make penal even the desire to look out of doors, even the assertion that a sky exists other than the roof of their building, or that there is any other than a very unblessed out-of-doors beyond its walls. Such are countries where free speech is forbidden, where free thought is racked and thumb-screwed, and where not only a man's overt actions, but his very hopes, his faith, his prayers, are prescribed. Here man is put into his own institutions, as into a box; and a very bad box it proves. Now these blank walls not only encompass society as a mass, but also run between individuals, cutting off bosom from bosom, and rendering impossible that streaming of heart-fires, that mounting flame from meeting brands, out of whose wondrous baptism come the consecrate deeds of mankind. Go to China, and to any living soul you obtain no access, or next to none,—such disastrous roods of etiquette are interposed between. It is as if one very cordially shook hands with you by means of a pair of tongs or a ten-foot pole. Indeed, it is hardly a man that you meet; it is a piece of automatic ceremony. Nor is it in China alone that men may be found who can hardly be accredited with proper personality. As one dying may distribute his property in legacies to various institutions and organizations,—so much, for example, to the Tract Society, so much to the Colonization Society, and the like,—in the same manner do many make wills at the outset of life for the disposal of their own personal powers, and do nothing afterward but execute this testament,—executing themselves in another sense at the same time. They parcel out themselves, their judgment, their conscience, and whatsoever pertains to their spiritual being, among the customs, traditions, institutions, etiquettes of their time, and renounce all claim to a free existence. After such a piece of spiritual *felo-de-se*, the man is nothing but one wheel in a machine, or even but one cog upon a wheel. Thenceforth he merely hangs together;—simple cohesion is the utmost approximation to action which can be truly attributed to him.

And as nothing is so ridiculous, so, few things are so mischievous, as the sincere insincerity, the estrangement from fact, of those who have thus parted with themselves. It is worse, if anything can be worse, than hypocrisy itself. The hypocrite sees two things,—the fact and the fiction, the gold and its counterfeit; he has virtue enough to know that he is a hypocrite. But the *post-mortem* man, the walking legacy, does not recognize the existence of eternal Fact; it has never occurred to his mind that anything could be more serious than "spiritual taking-on" and make-belief. An innocent old gentleman, being at a play where the heroine is represented as destroyed in at-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tempting to cross a broken bridge, rose, upon seeing her approach it, and in tones of the deepest concern offered his opinion that said bridge was unsafe! The *post-mortem* man reverses this harmless blunder, and makes it anything but harmless by the change; as that one took theatricals to be earnest fact, so this conceives virtue itself to consist in posturing; he thinks gold a clever imitation of brass, and the azure of the sky to be a kind of celestial cosmetic; in fine, formalities are the realest things he knows. It is said, that, in the later days of Rome, the augurs and inspectors of entrails could not look each other in the face during their ceremonies, for fear of bursting into a laugh. But still worse off than these pitiful peddlers of fraud is he who feigns without knowing that he feigns,—feigns unfeignedly, and calls God to witness that he is faithful in the performance of his part. This is ape's earnest, and is, perhaps, the largest piece of waste that ever takes place upon this earth. *Ape's earnest*, — it is a pit that swallows whole nations, whole ages; and the extent to which it may be carried is wellnigh incredible, even with the fact before our eyes. A Chinese gentleman spends an hour in imploring a relative to dine with him, — utterly refusing, so urgent is his desire of company, to accept No for an answer,—and then flies into a rage because the cousin commits the *faux pas* of yielding to his importunity, and agreeing to dine. Louis Napoleon perpetrates the king-joke of the century by solemnly presenting the Russian Czar with a copy of Thomas à Kempis's "Imitation of Christ,"—a book whose great inculcation is to renounce the world!

Now no sooner do men lose hold upon fact than they inevitably begin to wither. They resemble a tree drawn with all its roots from the earth; the juices already imbibed may sustain it awhile, but with every passing day will sustain it less. If Louis Napoleon is so removed from conversation with reality as not to perceive the colossal satire implied in his gift, it will soon require more vigor than he possesses to keep astride the Gallic steed. That Chinese etiquette explains the condition of the Chinese nation. Indeed, it is easy to give a recipe for mummying men alive. Take one into keeping, prescribe everything, thoughts, actions, manners, so that he never shall find either permission or opportunity to ask his own intellect, What is true? nor his own heart, What is right? nor to consider within himself what is intrinsically good and worthy of a man; and if he does not rebel, you will make him as good a mummy as Egyptian catacombs can boast.

The capital art of life is to renew and augment your power by its expenditure. It was intimated some eighteen centuries since that the highest are obtained only by loss of the same; and the transmutation of loss into gain is the essence and perfection of all spiritual economies. Now of this art of arts he is already master who steadily draws upon his own spiritual resources. The soul is an extraordinary well; the way to replenish is to draw from it. It is more miraculous than the widow's cruse;—that simply continued unexhausted,—never less, indeed, but also never more; while from this the more you take, the more remains in it. Were it, therefore, desired to arrange with forethought a scheme of life that should afford the highest invigoration, in such scheme there should be the minimum of prescription, and nothing be so sedulously avoided as the superseding of inward and active *principles* by outward and passive *rules*;—that is, life would be made as much moral and spontaneous, as little political and mechanical, as possible.

And this does not ill describe our own case. No civilized nation is so little imprisoned in precedents and traditions. Our national maxim is, "The world is too much governed." In the degree of this release we are, of course, thrown back upon underlying principles and universal persuasions,—since these of necessity become, in the absence of more artificial ties, the chief bond of such peace and coöperation as obtain. Leave two men to deal with each other, not merely

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as subjects or citizens, but as men, and they must recur to that which is at once native and common to both, to the universal elements in their consciousness, that is, to principles; and thus the most ordinary mutual dealing becomes, in some degree, a spiritual discipline. Harness these men in precedents, and whip them through the same action with penalties, and they will gain only such discipline as the ox obtains in the furrow and the horse between the thills. Statutes serve men, but lame them. They render morality mechanical. Men learn to say not, "It is right," but, "It is enacted." And the difference is immense. "Right" sends one to his own soul, and requires him to produce the living law out of that; "Enacted" sends him to the Revised Statutes, or the Reports, and there it ends. The latter gives a bit of information; the former a step in development. Laws are necessary; but laws which are not necessary are more and worse than unnecessary;—they pilfer power from the soul; they intercept the absolute uses of life; they incarcerate men, and make Caspar Hausers of them. Now in America not only is there already much emancipation from those outside regulations which supersede moral and private judgment, but the tendency toward a fresh life daily gains impetus. That repeal of the Missouri Compromise, however blamable, has several happy features, and prominent among these must be reckoned the illustration it affords of a growing disposition to say, "No putting To-day into Yesterday's coffin; let the Present *live* and be its own lord."

We need be at no loss to discover the effects of the combined influences here stated. The ordinary phrases of our country-people denote an alert judgment, —as, "I reckon," "I calculate," "I guess." The inventiveness which characterizes Americans, the multiplicity of patents, comes from the tendency to go behind the actual, to test possibilities, to bring everything to the standard of thought. Emerson dissolves England in the alembic of his brain, and makes a thought of that. Our politics are yearly becoming more and more questions of principle, questions of right and wrong. There is almost infinite promise and significance in this gradual victory of the moral over the political, of life over mechanism. Mr. Benton complains of the "speculative philanthropy" of New England, because it suggests questions upon which he could not meet his constituents, and interferes with his domestic arrangements. It is much as if one should pray God to abolish the sun because his own eyes are sore!

We now pass to the second great tendency which, as is here affirmed, organization and moral discipline are unitedly tending to establish on this shore. An inevitable consequence of the nervous intensity and susceptibility characteristic of Americans is an access of personal magnetism, or influence; we keenly feel each other, have social impressibility. The nervous is the public element in the body, the mediating and communicating power. It is the agent of every sense, — of sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell,—and of the power of speech. It is the vehicle of all fellow-feeling, of all social sympathy. It introduces man to man, and makes strangers acquainted. And a most unceremonious master of these ceremonies it is;—running indiscriminately across ranks; introducing beggar and baron; forcing the haughtiest master, spite of his theories, to feel that the slave *is* a man and a fellow; compelling the prince to acknowledge the peasant,—not with a shake of the hand, perhaps, but, it may be, with knee-shakings and heart-shakings. A terrible leveller and democrat is this master element in the human frame; yet king and kaiser must entertain him in courts and on thrones. Now the high development of this in the American Man renders him communicative, gives him a quick interest in men; he cannot let them pass without giving and taking. Hence the much-blamed inquisitiveness,—"What is your name? Where do you live? Where are you going?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What is your business? Do you eat baked beans on Sunday?" Mrs. Trollope is horrified; it is a bore; but one likes the man the better for it. He is interested in you;—that is the simple secret of all. King Carlyle calls us "eighteen millions of bores." To be sure; is that so bad? The primitive English element was pirate; let the primitive American *be* bore. The fathers of the Britain that is took men by the throat; let the fathers of the America that is to be take them by the—button;—that is amelioration enough for one thousand years! In truth, this intense personal interest which characterizes the American, though often awkwardly manifested and troublesome, is an admirable feature in his constitution, and few traits should awaken our pride or expectation more. It is this keen fellow-feeling that fits him for the broadest and most beneficent public interest. This makes him a philanthropist. And his philanthropy is peculiar. It is not merely of the neighborhood sort, such as sends a Thanksgiving turkey to poor Robert and a hat that does not fit well to poor Peter. For here the predilection for principles and generalizations comes in, and leads him to translate his fellow-feeling into social axioms. Thus it occurs that the American is that man who is grappling most earnestly and intelligently with the problem of man's relation to man. In every village is some knot of active minds that brood over questions of this kind. The monarch newspaper of America is deeply tinged with the same hue; nor could one with a contrary complexion attain its position. This great current of human interest floats our politics; it feeds the springs of enthusiasm, coming forth in doctrines of non-resistance, of government by love, and the like; and our literature contains essays upon love and friendship which, in our judgment, are not equalled in the literature of the world.

Nor is a moral discipline wanting to second this tendency. A terrible social anomaly has been forced upon us,—has had time to intertwine itself with trade, with creeds, with partisan prejudice and patriotic pride, and, having become next to unconquerable, now shows that it can keep no terms and must kill or be killed. And through this the question of man's duties to man, on the broadest scale, is incessantly kept in agitation. It is like a lurid handwriting across the sky,—"Learn what man should be and do to his fellow." And the companion sentence is this,—"Thy justice to the strangers shall be the best security to thine own household."

By the co-working of these two grand tendencies we obtain at once the largest speculative breadth and the closest practical and personal interest. What sweeter promise could any one ask than that of this rare and admirable combination? Thought and action have been more than sufficiently separated. The philosopher has discoursed to a few, and in the dialect of the few, in Academic shades; sanctity has hidden itself away, lost in the joy of its secret contemplations; the great world has rolled by, unhearing, unheeding,—like London roaring with cataract thunder around St. Paul's, while within the choral service is performed to an audience of one. Thinking and doing have hardly recognized each other. Now we are not of those vague, enthusiastic persons who fancy that all truths are for all ears,—that the highest spiritual fact can be communicated, where there is no spiritual apprehension to lay hold upon it. *He that hath ears*, let him hear. Nor would we attempt to confuse the functions of sayer and doer. But let there be a sympathy and understanding between them, that, when achieved, will mark an epoch in the world's history. Nowhere, at least in modern times, have thought and action approached so nearly and intimately as in America; nowhere is speculative intellect so colored with the hues of practical interest without limiting its own flight; nowhere are labor and executive power so receptive of pure intellectual suggestion. The union of what is deepest and most recondite in thought with clear-sighted

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sagacity has been well hit by Lowell in his description of the typical American scholar,—

> "Sits in a mystery calm and intense,
> And looks round about him with sharp common-sense."

That is, the New Man has two things that seldom make each other's acquaintance,—Sight and Insight. Accordingly, our subtilest thinker, whom the scholarly Mr. Vaughan classes with the mystics and accuses of going beyond the legitimate range even of mystics, has written such an estimate of the most practical nation in the world as has never been written of that or any other before. The American knows what is about him, has tact, sagacity, conversance with surfaces and circumstances, is the shrewdest guesser in the world; and seeing him on this side alone, one might say,—This is the man of to-day, a quick worker, good to sail ships, bore mountains, buy and sell, but belonging to the surface, knowing only that. The medal turns, and lo! here is this 'cute Yankee a thinker, a mystic, fellow of the antique, Oriental in his subtilest contemplations, a rider of the sunbeam, dwelling upon Truth's sweetness with such pure devotion and delight that vigorous Mr. Kingsley must shriek, "Windrush!" "Intellectual Epicurism!" and disturb himself in a somewhat diverting manner. Pollok declaimed against the attempt to lay hold of the earth with one hand and heaven with the other. But that is the peculiar feat for which the American is born,—to bring together seeing and doing, principle and practice, eternity and to-day. The American is given, they say, to extremes. True, but to *both* extremes; he belongs to the two antipodes. To the one he appertains by intellectual emancipation and penetrative power; to the other by his pungent element of sympathy with persons. Speaking of the older Northern States, and of the people as a whole, we affirm that their inhabitants are more speculative *and* more practical, the scholars know more of immediate common interests and speak more the dialect of the people, while the mechanics know more of speculative truth and understand better the necessary vocabulary of thought, than any other people.

Lyell says, that the New World is really the Old World,—that there, preëminently, the antique geological formations are found, and nearer the surface than elsewhere. Thus the physical peculiarity of our continent is, that here an elaborate and highly finished surface is immediately superimposed upon the oldest rock, rock wrought in fire and kneaded with earthquake knuckles. We discover in this a symbol of the American Man. He likewise brings into near association the most ancient and the most modern. By insight he dwells in the old thoughts, the eternal truths, the meditations that rapt away the early seers into trance and dream; but he brings these into sharp contact with life, associates them with the newest work, the toil and interests of this year and day.

We shall find space to mention but one peril which besets the New Man. It is danger of physical exhaustion. Dr. Kane, the hero of two Arctic nights, came forth to the day only to die. That which makes the preëminence of our organization makes also its peril. Denmark is said to be impoverished by the disproportion of the learned to the industrial class; production is insufficient, and too much of a good thing cripples the country. The nervous system is a learned class in the body; it contributes dignity and superior uses, but makes no corn grow in the physiological fields. A brain of great animation and power is a perilous freight for the stanchest body; in a weak and shattered body it is like gold in a spent swimmer's pocket,—the richer it would make him on dry land, the less chance it gives him of arriving there. That this danger is not imaginary too many are able to testify.—Few scenes in Rabelais are more exquisitely ludicrous than that in which he pictures the monk Panurge in a storm at sea. The oily ecclesiastic is terrified as only a combination of hypocrite and coward can be; and, in the ex-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tremity of his craven distress, he fancies that any situation on shore, no matter how despicable, would be paradise. So at length he whines, "Oh that I were on dry land, and somebody kicking me!" In a similar manner—similar, save that farce deepens to tragedy—many a man in America of opulent mental outfit, but with only a poor wreck of a body to bear the precious cargo, must often have been tempted to cry, "Oh that I had a sound digestion, and were some part of a dunce!" In truth, we are a nation of health-hunters, betraying the want by the search. It were to be wished that an accurate computation could be made how much money has been paid in the United States, within a score of years, for patent medicines. It would buy up a kingdom of respectable dimensions. So eager is this health-hunger, that it bites at bare hooks. The "advertising man" of Arnold's Globules offers his services as nostrum-puffer-general, and appeals to past success as proof of his abilities in this line. But Arnold's Globules will sell no whit the worse. Is the amiable Mr. Knox right, after all? Doubtless, we answer, the American organization is more easily disordered than the English,—just as a railway-train running at forty miles an hour is more liable to accident than one proceeding at twenty. Besides, Americans have not learned to live as these new circumstances require. The New Man is a clipper-ship, that can run out of sight of land while one of the old bluff-bowed, round-ribbed craft is creeping out of port; but, from the very nature of his superiorities, he is apt to be shorter-lived, and more likely to spring a leak in the strain of a storm. He demands nicer navigation. It will not do for him to beat over sand-bars. Yet dinner-pilotage in this country is reckless and unscientific to a degree. The land is full of wrecks hopelessly snagged upon indigestible diet. As yet, it is difficult to obtain a hearing for precaution. Men answer you out of their past experience, —much like a headstrong personage who was about to attempt crossing a river in a boat sure to sink. "You will drown, if you go in that thing," said a bystander. "Never was drowned yet," was the prompt retort; and pushing off, he soon lost the opportunity to repeat that boast! But this resistance is constantly becoming less. Meantime, numbers of foreseeing men are waking up, or are already awakened, to the importance of recreation and physical culture,—members of the clerical profession, to the credit of the craft be it said, taking the lead. Messrs. Beecher, Bellows, and Hale plead the cause of amusements; the author of "Saints and their Bodies" celebrates the uses and urges the need of athletic sports; gymnasia are becoming matters of course in the cities and larger towns; "The New York Tribune" attends to the matter of cookery; and it is safe to predict that the habits of the people will undergo in time the necessary changes. That health is possible to Americans ought not to be questioned. Of despair we will not listen to a word. In crossing the ocean, in the backwoods-experience which everywhere precedes cultivation, in the excitement which has followed the obliteration of social monopolies and the throwing open of the wealth of a continent to free competition, the old traditional precautions have been lost, the old household wisdoms, the old economies of health; and these we have now to reproduce for ourselves. It will be done. And when this is done, though ancient English brawn will not reappear, there will be health, and its great blessing of cheerful spirits. The special means by which this shall be accomplished we leave to the care of the gentlemen abovenamed, and their compeers,—merely putting in one word for *gentle* exercise, and two words for the cherishing of mental health, the expulsion of morbid excitements, assume what guise they may. We should take extreme care not to admit decay at the summit. A healthy soul is a better prophylactic than belladonna. Refusing to despond respecting American health, we cheerfully trust that the genius of the New Man will find all required physical sup-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

port, and due length of time for demonstrating its quality.

And now we may notice a doubt which some readers will cherish. Is not all this, they may say, over-sanguine and enthusiastic? Is it not a self-complacent dream? Are the tendencies adverted to so productive? Is any such genius really forming as is here claimed? Is it not, on the contrary, now fully understood that the Americans are a commonplace people, meagre-minded money-makers, destitute of originality? What have they done to demonstrate genius yet?—These skepticisms are somewhat prevalent nowadays, and are a natural enough reaction from Fourth-of-July flatulencies. Let them have their day. The fact will vindicate itself. Meanwhile we may remark, that the appeal to attained performance, in justification of the view taken in this paper of American abilities and prospects, would obviously place us at undue disadvantage. We speak here, and are plainly entitled to speak, rather of tendencies than of attainments, of powers forming themselves in man, and not of results produced without him. Nevertheless, results there are,—admirable, satisfactory results.

As first of these may be mentioned American Reform. In depth, in breadth, in vigor, in practical quality, this may challenge comparison with anything of a similar kind elsewhere. This is the direct outburst of a new life, arising and wrestling with the old forms, habitudes, institutions,—with whatsoever is imported and traditional, on the one hand, and with the crude or barbarous improvisations of native energy, on the other. It is a force springing out of the summit of the brain, the angel of its noblest sentiment, going forth with no less an aim than to construct a whole new social status from ideas. And the token of its superiority is this,—that it builds its new outward life only from the most ancient incorruptible material, out of the eternal granite of Moral Law. Sweeping social *schemes* prevail in France. But American Reform is not a scheme; it is the service of an *idea*. It is made conservative by that which also makes it radical, by working in the interest of the moral sentiment.

The Literature of the New World is also worthy of the New Man. We are quite aware that a large portion of this literature is trash. Sô was a large part in Shakspeare's, in Cervantes's, in Plato's age and place. But we admit even that the comparison does not hold,—that an especial accusation may be brought against the issues of the press in this country. Wise men should have anticipated this, and, instead of reasoning from the size of our lakes, prairies, and mountains, and demanding epics and philosophies of us before we are fairly out of our primitive woods, the critics should have hastened to say,—A colony must have time to strike root, and to draw up therefrom a new life, before it can arrive at valuable and genuine literary expression. The Life must come before the Thought. Nothing could be more absurd than the expectation that American literature should spring away into the air from the top of European performance. Our first literature was colonial,—that is, imitative, written for the approbation of European critics,—of course, having somewhat the empty correctness of good school-boy composition. Next followed what we may call fire-weed literature,—the first rank, raw product of new lands. Under these two heads a vast number of books must of course be reckoned. But beyond these American literature has already passed, and now can point to books that spring out of the pure genius of the New Man. And having only these in mind, we hesitate not to say that there is now sounding upon these shores a deeper, subtiler, and more universal note than is heard in any other land touched by the Atlantic Sea. We have now writings in several departments of literature, and in both prose and verse, which are characterized by a breadth and largeness of suggestion, by a spirituality and a prophetic adherence to the moral sentiment, which justify all that has here been affirmed or reasoned.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And our deepest thought finds a popular reception which proves it not foreign or exceptional. Wilkinson's "Human Body," the largest piece of speculative construction which England has produced in two centuries, has not yet, after some eight years, we believe, exhausted its first edition. Emerson's Poems, still less adapted, one would say, than the work just mentioned, to the taste of populaces, had reached its fourth edition in about the same period. Learned works have, of course, a superior reception in the mother-country; works of pure thought in the daughter. Said to us, during the past season, the subtilest thinker of Great Britain,—"I must send to America whatever I wish to put in print, unless I pay for its publication from my own pocket."

And beyond this, there is a hush in the nation's heart, an expectancy, a waiting and longing for some unspoken word, which sometimes seems awful in the bounty of its promise. I know men educated to speak, with the burden of a speaker's vocation on their hearts, but now these many years remaining heroically silent; the fountains of a fresh consciousness sweet within them, but not yet flowing into speech, and they too earnest, too expectant, too sure of the future to say aught beneath the strain. "Why do you not speak?" was inquired of one. "Because I can keep silent," he said, "and the word I am to utter will command me." No man assumes that attitude until he is already a party to the deepest truth, is the silent side of a seer; and in a nation where any numbers are passing this more than Pythagorean lustrum, a speech is surely coming that will no more need to apologize for itself than the speech of the forest or the ocean-shore. The region of the trade-winds is skirted with calm. Sydney Smith said of Macaulay, that his talk, to render it charming, "needed only a few brilliant flashes of silence." We are talkative, but the flashes of silence are not wanting, and there is prophecy in them as well as charm. Said one, of a speaker,—"He was so rarely eloquent, that what he did not say was even better than what he did." And here, not only are some wholly silent, but in our best writings the impressive not-saying lends its higher suggestion than that expressly put forth. What spaces between Emerson's sentences! Each seems to float like a solitary summer-cloud in a whole sky of silence.

Yes, the fact is already indubitable, a rich life, sure in due time of its rich expression, is forming here. As out of the deeps of Destiny, the Man for the Continent, head-craftsman, hand-craftsman, already puts his foot to this shore. All hail, new-comer! Welcome to great tasks, great toils, to mighty disciplines, to victories that shall not be too cheaply purchased, to defeats that shall be better than victories! We give thee joy of new powers, new work, unprecedented futures! We give the world joy of a new and mighty artist to plan, a new strong artisan to quarry and to build in the great architectures of humanity!

THE POET KEATS.

His was the soul, once pent in English clay,
Whereby ungrateful England seemed to hold
The sweet Narcissus, parted from his stream,—
Endymion, not unmindful of his dream.
Like a weak bird the flock has left behind,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Untimely notes the poet sung alone,
Checked by the chilling frosts of words unkind;
And his grieved soul, some thousand years astray,
Paled like the moon in most unwelcome day.

His speech betrayed him ere his heart grew cold;
With morning freshness to the world he told
Of man's first love, and fearless creed of youth,
When Beauty he believed the type of Truth.

In the vexed glories of unquiet Troy,
So might to Helen's jealous ear discourse
The flute, first tuned on Ida's haunted hill,
Against Œnone's coming, to betray
In what sweet solitude her shepherd lay.

Yet, Poet-Priest! the world shall ever thrill
To thy loved theme, its charm undying still!
Hearts in their youth are Greek as Homer's song.
And all Olympus half contents the boy,
Who from the quarries of abounding joy
Brings his white idols without thought of wrong.

With reverent hand he sets each votive stone,
And last, the altar "To the God Unknown."

As in our dreams the face that we love best
Blooms as at first, while we ourselves grow old,—
As the returning Spring in sunlight throws
Through prison-bars, on graves, its ardent gold,—
And as the splendors of a Syrian rose
Lie unreproved upon the saddest breast,—
So mythic story fits a changing world:
Still the bark drifts with sails forever furled.
An unschooled Fancy deemed the work her own,
While mystic meaning through each fable shone.

HER GRACE, THE DRUMMER'S DAUGHTER.

FORAY, a mass of crags embellished by some greenness, looked up to heaven a hundred miles from shore. It was a fortified position, and a place of banishment. In the course of a long war, waged on sea and land between two great nations, this, "least of all," became a point of some importance to the authority investing it; the fort was well supplied with the machinery of death, and the prison filled with prisoners. But peace had now been of long continuance; and though a nation's banner floated from the tower of the fort, and was seen afar by mariners,—though the cannon occupied their ancient places, ordered for

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

instant use,—though all within the fort was managed and conducted day by day with careful regard to orders,—the operations indicated, in the spirit of their conduct, no fear of warlike surprises. No man gave or obeyed an order as if his life depended on his expedition. Neither was the prison the very place it had been; for, once, every cell had its occupant,—an exile, or a prisoner of war.

The officials of the island led an easy life, therefore. Active was the brain that resisted the influences of so much leisure as most of these people had. But, under provocation even, Nature must be true. So true is she, indeed, that every violation of her dignities illustrates the meaning of that sovereign utterance, VENGEANCE IS MINE. She will not bring a thorn-tree from an acorn. Pray, day and night, and see if she will let you gather figs of thistles. Prayer has its conditions, and faith is not the sum of them.

But Nature's buoyant spirits must needs conquer the weight of influences whose business is to depress. And they, seeking, find their centre among things celestial, in spite of all opposing. Much leisure, light labor, was not the worst thing that could befall some of the men whose lot was cast on Foray.

Adolphus Montier was a member of the military band. He was drummer to the regiment by the grace of his capacity. Besides, he played on the French horn, to the admiration of his wife, and others; and he could fill, at need, the place of any missing member of the company, leaving nothing to be desired in the performance.

Adolphus came to Foray in the first vessel that brought soldiers hither. He saw the first stone laid in the building of the fort. Here he had lived since. He was growing gray in the years of peace. He had some scars from the years of strife. He was a brave fellow, and idleness, a devil's bland disguise, found no favor with him.

His daughter Elizabeth was the first child born on the island. Bronzed warriors smiled on her fair infancy; sometimes they called her, with affectionate intonation, "The Daughter of the Regiment." She deserved the notice they bestowed,—as infancy in general deserves all it receives,—but Elizabeth for other reasons than that she had come whence none could tell, and was going whither no man could predict,—for other reason than that she was the first discovered native of the island. She was a beautiful child; and I state this fact not specially in deference to the universal expectation that a character brought forward for anybody's notice should be personally capable of fascinating such. Indeed, it seems inevitable that we find our heroines and heroes in life beautiful. Miss Nightingale must needs remain our type of pure charity in person, as in character. Elisha Kent Kane among his icebergs must stand manifestly efficient for his "princely purpose," his eye and brow magnificent with beauty. Rachel, to every woman's memory, must live the unparalleled Camille.

Little Elizabeth—I smile to write her name upon the page with these—it were a shame to cheat of beauty by any bungle of description. Is not a fair spirit predestined conqueror of flesh and blood? Have we not read of the noble lady whose loveliness a painter's eye was the very first to discover? Where the likeness? The soul saw it, not the eye; and he understood, who, seeing it, exclaimed, "Our friend—in heaven!"

While Adolphus Montier cleaned and polished his French horn, an occupation which was his unfailing resource, if he could find nothing else to do, or when he practised his music, business in which he especially delighted when off duty, it was his pleasure to have wife and child with him.

Imagination was an active power in the Drummer's sphere. He, away off in Foray, used to talk about the forms and colors of sounds, as if he knew about them; and he had not learned the talk in any school. He would have done no injury to transcendentalism. And he was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a happy man, in that the persons before whom he indulged in this manner of speech rather encouraged it. Never had his Pauline's pride and fondness failed Adolphus the Drummer. Life in Foray was little less than banishment, though it had its wages and—renown; but Pauline made out of this single man her country, friends, and home. Never woman endeavored with truer single-heartedness to understand her spouse. In her life's aim was no failure. Let him expatiate on sound to the bounds of fancy's extravagance, she could confidently follow, and would have volunteered her testimony to a doubter, as if all were a question of tangible fact, to be definitely proved. So in every matter. For all the comfort she was to the man she loved, for her confidence in him who deserved it, for her patient endurance of whatsoever ill she met or bore, for choosing to walk in so peaceful a manner, with a heart so light and a face so fair, praise to the Drummer's wife!

Elizabeth, the companion of her parents in all their happy rambling and unambitious home-life, was their joy and pride. If she frolicked in the grass while her father played his airs, she lost not a strain of the music. She hearkened also to his deep discourse, and gave good heed, when he illustrated the meaning of the tunes he loved to play. And these were rarely the stirring strains with which the Governor's policy kept the band chiefly busy when the soldiers gathered on summer nights in knots of listeners, and the ladies of the fort, the Governor's wife, and the wives of the officers, came out to enjoy the evening, or when a vessel touched the rocky shore.

Elizabeth's vision was clearer than even love could make her mother's,—clearer than music made her father's; since a distinct conception of images seems not to be inevitable among the image-makers. The prophets are not always to be called upon for an interpretation. No white angel ever floats more clearly before the eyes of those who look on the sculptor's finished work than before the eyes of Elizabeth appeared the shapes and hues of sounds which swept in gay or solemn procession through the windings of her father's horn, floating over the blue water, dissolving as the mist. No bright-winged bird, fair flower, or gorgeous sunset or sea-wave, was more distinct to the child's eyes than the hues of the same notes, stately as palm or pine,—red as crimson, white as wool, rich and full as violet, softly compelling as amethyst.

Pauline Montier was by nature as active and diligent as Adolphus. She was a seamstress before the days of Foray and the Drummer, and still continued to ply her needle, though no longer urged by necessity. She sewed for the officers' wives, she knit stockings and mufflers for the soldiers. The income thus derived independently of Montier's public service was very considerable.

Born of such parents, Elizabeth would have had some difficulty in persuading herself that her business was to idle through this life.

Her early experiences were not as peaceful as those which followed her tenth year. The noise of battle, the cries of defeat, the shouts of victory, the sight of agonized faces, the vision of death, the struggles of pain and anguish, the sorrow of bereavement,—she had seen all with those young eyes. She had heard the whispered command in hushed moments of mortal danger, and the shout of triumph in the tumult of victory,—had watched blazing ships, seen prisoners carried to their cells, attended the burial of brave men slain in battle, had marched with soldiers keeping time to funeral strains. Her courage and her pity had been stirred in years when she could do no more than see and hear. Once standing, through the heat of a bloody engagement, by the side of a lad, a corporal's son, who was stationed to receive and communicate an order, a random shot struck the boy down at her side. She saw that he was dead, —waited for the order, transmitted it,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and then carried away the lifeless body of her fellow-sentinel, staggering under the weighty burden, never resting till she had laid him in the shelter of his father's quarters. After the engagement, this story was told through the victorious ranks by the witnesses of her valor, and a medal was awarded the child by acclamation. She always wore it, and was as proud of it as a veteran of his ribbons and stars.

But now, in times of peace, the fair flower of her womanhood was forming. Like a white hyacinth she grew,—a lady to look upon, with whom, for loveliness, not a lady of the fort could be compared. Not one of them in courage or unselfishness exceeded her.

The family lived in a little house adjoining the barracks. It was a home that could boast of nothing beyond comfort and cleanliness;—the word comfort I use as the poor man understands it. Neither Adolphus nor Pauline had any worldly goods to bring with them when they came to Foray. They lived at first, and for a long time, in the barracks; the little house they now occupied had once been used for the storage of provisions; but when the war ended, Adolphus succeeded in obtaining permission to turn it into a dwelling-house. Here the child was sheltered, and taught the use of a needle; and here she learned to read and write.

In the great vegetable garden which covered the space between the prison and the fort was a corner that reflected no great credit on the authorities. The persons who might reasonably have been expected to take that neglected bit of ground under their loving care did no such thing. The beds were weeded by Sandy, the gardener, and now and then a blossom rewarded that attention; but the flower-patch waited for Elizabeth.

The gardener knew very well how she prized the pretty flowers;—they appealed to his own rude nature in a very tender way. He loved to see the young girl flying down the narrow paths as swiftly as a bird, if she but spied a bloom from afar. There was a tree whose branches hung over the wall, every one of them growing, with dreadful perversity, away from the cold, hard prison-ground which held the roots so fast. Time was never long enough when she sat in the shade of those branches, watching Sandy at his work.

By-and-by it happened that the flower-garden was given over to the charge of the girl. It was natural that she, who had never seen other flower-beds than these, should, aided by the home-recollections of her mother, imagine far prettier,—that she should dare suggest to Sandy, until his patience and his skill were exhausted,—that the final good result should have come about in a moment when no one looked for it,—he giving up his task with vexation, she accepting it with humility, and both working together thereafter, the most helpful of friends.

It required not many seasons for Elizabeth to prove her skill and diligence in the culture of this garden-ground,—not many for the transformation of square, awkward beds into a mass of bloom. How did those flowers delight the generous heart! With what particular splendor shone the house of Montier through all the summer season! The ladies now began to think about bouquets, and knew where they could find them. From this same blessed nook the Governor's table was daily supplied with its most beautiful ornament. Men tenderly disposed smiled on the young face that from under the broad-brimmed garden-hat smiled back on them. Some deemed her fairer than the flowers she cared for.

One day in the spring of the year that brought her thirteenth birthday, Elizabeth ran down through the morning mist, and plucked the first spring flower. She stayed but to gather the beauty whose budding she had long watched; no one must rob her mother of this gift.

She carried off the prize before the gaze of one who had also hailed it in the bleak, drear dawn. This was not the gardener;—and there was neither man, woman, nor child in sight, during the swift run;—no freeman; but a prisoner

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in an upper room of the prison. Through its grated window, the only one on that side of the building, he had that morning for the first time looked upon the island which had held him long a prisoner.

Since daybreak he had stood before the window. The evening before, the stone had been rolled away from the door of his sepulchre,—not by an angel, neither by force of the resistless Life-spirit within, shall it be said? Who knows that it was *not* by an angel? who shall aver it was *not* by the resistless Life? At least, he was here,—brought from the cell he had occupied these five years,—brought from the arms of Death. His window below had looked on a dead stone-wall; this break in the massive masonry gave heaven and earth to him.

The first ray of daylight saw him dragging his feeble body to the window. He did not remove from that post till the rain was over,—nor then, except for a moment. As the clouds rose from the sea, he watched them. How strange was the aspect of all things! Thus, while he had lived and not beheld, these trees had waved, these waters rolled, these clouds gathered,—grass had grown, and flowers unfolded; for he saw the scarlet bloom before Elizabeth plucked it. And all this while he had lived like a dead man, unaware! Not so; but now he remembered not the days, when, conscious of all this life, he had deathly despair in his heart, and stones alone for friends.

Imprisonment and solitude had told upon the man. He was still young, and one whom Nature and culture had fitted for no obscure station in the world. He could, by every evidence he gave, perform no mere commonplaces of virtue or of vice. The world's ways would not assign his limitation. He was capable of devising and of executing great things,—and had proved the power; and to this his presence testified, even in dilapidation and listlessness.

His repose was the repose of helplessness,—not that of grace or nature. The opening of this prospect with the daylight had not the effect to increase his tranquillity. His dejection in the past months had been that of a strong man who yields to necessity; his present mood was not inspired with hope. The waves that leaped in the morning's gloomy light were not so aimless as his life seemed to him. He had heard a bird sing in the branches of a tree whose roots were in the prison-yard,—now he could see her nest; he had heard the dismal pattering of the rain,—and now beheld it, and the clouds from which it fell; he saw the glimpses of the blue beyond, where the clouds were breaking; he saw the fort, the cannon mounted on the walls, the flag that fluttered from the tower, the barracks, the parade-ground, and the surrounding sea, whose boundaries he knew not; he saw the trees, he saw the garden-ground. Slowly his eyes scanned all,—and the soul that was lodged in the emaciated figure grew faint and sick with seeing. But no tears, no sighs, no indications of grief or despair or desperate submission. He had little to learn of suffering;—that he knew. How could he greet the day, hail the light, bless Nature for her beauty, thank God for his life? Oh, the weariness with which he leaned his head against those window-bars, faint and almost dying under the weight of thoughts that rushed upon him, fierce enough to slay, if he showed any resistance! But he manifested none. The day of struggle was over with him. He believed that they had brought him to this room to die. If any thought could give him joy, surely it was this. He was right. Yesterday the Governor of the island, hearing the condition of the prisoner, this one remaining man of all whose sentence had been endured within these walls, had ordered a change of scene for him. His sentence was imprisonment for life. Did they fear his release by the hands of one who hears the sighing of the prisoner, and gives to every bondman the Year of Jubilee? Were they jealous and suspicious of the approach of Death?

Though he had been so long a prisoner, he showed in his person self-respect and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dignity of nature. His hair and beard were grown long; many a gray thread shone in his chestnut locks; his mouth was a firm feature; his eyes quiet, but not the mildest; his forehead very ample; he was lofty in stature; — outside the prison, a freeman, his presence would have been commanding. But he needed the free air for his lungs, and the light to surround him,—the light to set him in relief, the sense of life to compel him to stand out in his own powerful individuality, distinct from every other living man.

By-and-by, while he stood at the window, looking forth upon the strange scenes before him, this new heaven and new earth, the landscape became alive. The first human creature he had seen outside his cell since he became an inmate of this prison appeared before his eyes,—the young girl skipping through the garden till she came to the flower-bed and plucked the scarlet blossom. If she had been a spirit or an angel, he could hardly have beheld her with greater surprise.

She was singing when she came. He thought he recognized that voice,—that it was the same he had often heard from the cell below. Many a time the horrible stillness of that cell had been broken by the sound of a child's voice, which, like a spirit, swept unhindered through the walls,—an essence of life, and a power.

It was but a moment that she paused before the flower; she plucked it, and was gone. But his eyes could follow her. She did not really, with her disappearing, vanish. And yet this vision had not to him the significance of the bow seen in the cloud, whose interpreter, and whose interpretation, was the Almighty Love.

All day he stood before that window. The keeper hailed the symptom. The Governor was satisfied with the report. Towards sunset the rain was over, and with the sun came forth abundant indications of the island life. The gardener walked among the garden-beds and measured his morrow's work, calculating time and means within his reach,—and vouchsafing some attention to the flower-garden, as was evident when he paused before it and made his thoughtful survey. The prisoner saw him smile when he took hold of the broken stalk which had been flower-crowned. And Sandy saw the prisoner.

The next day Elizabeth came out with the gardener, and they began their day's work together. They seemed to be in the best spirits. The smell of the fresh-turned earth, the sight of the fresh shoots of tender green springing from bulb and root and branch, acted upon them like an inspiration. The warm sun also held them to their task. Sandy was generous in bestowing aid and counsel,—and also in the matter of his land,—trenching farther on the ground allotted to the vegetables than he had ever done before.

"The land must pay for it," said he. "We'll make a foot give us a yard's worth. Cram a bushel into a peck, though 'The Doctor' said you never could do that! I know how to coax."

"Yes, and you know how to order, if you have not forgotten, Sandy. You frightened me once for taking an inch over my share."

"That was a long while back," answered honest Sandy,—"before I knew what the little girl could do. I've seen young folk work at gardening afore, but you do beat 'em all. How could I tell you would, though? You don't look it. Yes,—maybe you do, though. But you've changed since *I* first knew you."

"Why, I was nothing but a baby then, Sandy."

"Yes, yes,—I know; but you're changed since then!"

So they all spoke to Elizabeth, praising her, confiding in her with loving willingness,—the Daughter of the Regiment.

The gardener was proud of his assistant, and seemed to enjoy the part she took in his labor. They worked till noon, Elizabeth stopping hardly a moment to rest. All this while the prisoner stood watching by his window, and the gardener saw him. The sight occasioned him a new perplexity, and he gravely considered

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the subject. It was a good while before he said to Elizabeth, speaking on conviction, in his usual low and rather mysterious tone,—

"There's some one will enjoy it when all's done."

"Who is that?" asked she, thinking he meant herself, perhaps.

"One up above," was the answer.

But though Sandy spoke thus plainly, he did not look toward the prison,—and the prison was the last place of which Elizabeth was thinking. It was so long a time since the cell with the window had an occupant, that she was almost unconscious of that gloomy neighborhood. So, when the gardener explained that it was one up above who would enjoy her work, her eyes instantly sought the celestial heights. She was thinking of sun, or star, or angel, may-be, and smiling at Sandy's speech, for sympathy.

He saw her new mistake, and made haste to correct this also.

"Not so high," said he, cautiously.

Then, but as it seemed of chance, and not of purpose, the eyes of Elizabeth Montier turned toward the prison-wall, and fixed upon that window, the solitary one visible from the garden, and her face flushed in a manner that told her surprise when she saw a man behind the iron bars.

"Oh," said she, looking away quickly, as if conscious of a wrong done, "what made you tell me?"

"I guess you will like to think one shut up like him will take a little pleasure looking at what he can't get at," said Sandy, almost sharply,—replying to something he did not quite understand, the pain and the reproof of Elizabeth's speech.

"Oh, yes!" she answered, and went on with her work.

But though she might be pleased to think that her labor would answer another and more serious purpose than her own gratification, or that of the pretty flowers, it was something new and strange for the girl to work under this mysterious sense of oversight.

"You have only got to speak the word," said the gardener, who had perceived her perplexity, and was desirous of bringing her speedily to his view of the case, "just speak, and he will be carried back to his old cell below, t'other side."

"Will he?"

"Yes,—sure's you live, if he troubles you, Miss Elizabeth. Nobody will think of letting him trouble you."

"Oh, me!" she exclaimed, quickly, "I should die quicker than have him moved where he couldn't see the garden."

"I thought so," said Sandy, satisfied.

"Did you think I would complain of his standing by his window, Sandy?"

"How did I know you would like to be stared at?" asked he, with a laugh.

Elizabeth blushed and looked grave; to her the matter seemed too terrible.

"I might have said something," she mused, sadly.

"And if it had been to the wrong person," suggested Sandy;—"for they a'n't very fond of him, I guess."

"Who is he, then? I never heard."

"He has been shut up in that building now a'most five year, Elizabeth," said Sandy, leaning on the handle of the spade he had struck into the ground with emphasis.

"Five years!"

"Summer heat, and winter cold. All the same to him. No wonder he sticks, as if he was glued, to the window, now he's got one worth the glass."

"Oh, let him!"

"If he could walk about the garden, it would be better yet."

"Won't he, Sandy?"

"I can't say. He's here for some terrible piece of work, they say. And nobody knows what his name is, I guess,—hereabouts, I mean. I never heard it. He won't be out very quick. But let him *look* out, any way."

"Oh, Sandy! I might have said something that would have hindered!"

"Didn't I know you wouldn't for the world? That's why I told you."

The gardener now went on with his spading. But Elizabeth's work seemed

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

finished for this day. Above them stood the prisoner. He guessed not what gentle hearts were pitiful with thinking of his sorrow.

The next day the prisoner was not at the window, nor the next day, nor the next. Sandy was bold enough to ask the keeper, Mr. Laval, what was the meaning of it, and learned that the man was ill, and not likely to recover. Sandy told Elizabeth, and they agreed in thinking that for the poor creature death was probably the least of evils.

But the day following that on which they came to this conclusion, the sick man appeared before Sandy's astonished eyes. He was under the keeper's care. The physician had ordered this change of air, and they came to the garden at an hour when there was least danger of meeting other persons in the walks.

Sandy had much to tell Elizabeth when he saw her next. She trembled while he told her how he thought that he had seen a ghost when the keeper came leading the prisoner, whose pale face, tall figure, feeble step, appeared to have so little to do with human nature and affairs.

"Did he seem to care for the flowers? did he take any?" she asked.

"No,—he would not touch them. The keeper offered him whatever he would choose. He desired nothing. But he looked at all, he saw everything,—even the beds of vegetables," Sandy said.

"Did he seem pleased?" Elizabeth again asked.

"Pleased!" exclaimed Sandy. "That's for you and me,—not a man that's been shut up these five years. No,—he didn't look pleased. I don't know how he looked; don't ask me; 'tisn't pleasant to think of."

"I would have made him take the flowers, if I had been here," said Elizabeth, in a manner that seemed very positive, in comparison with Sandy's uncertain speech.

"May-be,—I dare say," Sandy acquiesced; but he evidently had his doubts even of her power in this business.

She must take no notice of the prisoner, she was given to understand one day, if she was to remain in the garden while he walked there. So she took no notice.

He came and went. Manuel, the keeper called him; and she was busy with her weeding, and neither saw nor heard. Ah, she did not!—did *not* see the figure that came moving like a spectre through the gates!—did not hear the slow dragging step of one who is weary almost to helplessness,—the listless step that has lost the spring of hope, the exultation of life, the expectation of spirit, the strength of manhood!—She did hear, did see the man. We feel the nearness of our friend who is a thousand miles away. Something beside the sunshine is upon us, and receives our answering smile. That sudden shadow is not of the passing cloud. That voice at midnight is not the disturbance of a dream.—He walked about the garden; he retired to his cell. It might have been an hour, or a minute, or a day. It does not take time to dream a life's events. How is the drowning man whirled round the circle of experiences which were so slow in their development!

Compassion without limit, courageous purpose impatient of inaction, troubled this young girl.

"You behaved like a lady," said Sandy,—"you never looked up. You needn't run now, I'm sure, when he thinks of taking a turn. All we've got to do is to mind our own business, Mr. Laval says. I guess we can. But I did want to let off those chains."

"What chains?" asked Elizabeth, as with a shudder she looked up at Sandy.

"His wrists, you know,—locked," he explained.

"Oh!" groaned the gentle soul, and she walked off, forgetful of the flowers, tools, Sandy, everything. But Sandy followed her; she heard him calling to her, and before the garden-gate she waited for him; he was following on a run.

"I can tell you what it's for," said he, for he had no idea of keeping the secret

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to himself, and he dared not trust it to any other friend.

"What is it?" she asked,—and she trembled when she asked, and while she waited for his answer.

"For fighting the Church. Would you think that? He did such damage, it wasn't safe for him to be at liberty. That's how it was. I think he must be a Lutheran;—you know they don't believe in the Holy Ghost! Of course,—poor fellow!—it's right he should be shut up for warring with the Church that came down through the holy Apostles, when you know all the rest only started up with Luther and Calvin. He ought to have knowed better."

"Who told you, Sandy?" asked Elizabeth, as if her next words might undertake to extenuate and justify.

"It came straight enough, I understand. But—remember—you don't know anything about it. His name is Manuel, though;—don't dare to mention it;—that's what Mr. Laval calls him. Are you going? I wouldn't have told you a word, but you took his trouble so to heart. You see, now, it's right he should be shut up. But let on that you know anything, all the worse for me,—I mean, him!"

"Yes," said Elizabeth, "you're safe, Sandy. Thank you for telling me."

Sandy walked off with a mind relieved, for he believed in Elizabeth, and had found the facts communicated too great a burden to bear alone.

She passed through the garden-gate most remote from the fort; it opened into a lonely road which ran inland from the coast, between the woods and the prison, and to the woods she went. The shadows were gloomy to-day, for she went among them lamenting the fate of the stranger;—the mystery surrounding him had increased, not lessened, with Sandy's explanation.

Fighting against *the Church* was an unimagined crime. Of the great conflict in which he had taken part, to the ruin of his fortunes, she knew nothing. The disputes of Christendom, had they been explained, would have seemed almost incredible to her. For, whatever was known and discussed in the circle of the Governor of the island, Drummer Montier, and such as he, kept the peace with all mankind. The Church took care of itself, and appeared neither the oppressor nor the Saviour of the world. What they had fought about in the first years of the possession of Foray, Montier could hardly have told,—and yet he was no fool. He could have given, of course, a partisan version of the struggle; but as to its real cause, or true result, he knew as little as the other five hundred men belonging to the regiment.

While Elizabeth wandered through those gloomy woods, she saw no flowers, gathered no wild fruits,—though flowers and berries were perfect and abundant. Now and then she paused in her walk to look towards the prison, glimpses of whose strong walls were to be had through the trees. At length the sound of her father's horn came loud and clear from the cliffs beyond the wood. It fell upon her sombre meditation and slightly changed the current. She hurried forward to join him, and, as she went, a gracious purpose was shining in her face.

When she returned home, it was by the unfrequented prison-way, her father playing the liveliest tunes he knew. For the first time in their lives they sat down by the side of the lonely road where they had emerged from the wood; Elizabeth's memory served her to recall every air that was sweet to her, and she listened while her father played, endeavoring to understand the sound those notes would have to "Manuel."

Montier could think of no worthier employment than the practice of his music. Especially it pleased him that his daughter should ask so much as she was now asking: he could not discern all that was passing in her heart, nor see how many shadows moved before those sweet, serious eyes.

They went home at night-fall together; and the young girl's step was not more light, now that her heart was troubled by what she must not reveal, even to him.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The next morning Sandy was very busy with Elizabeth, tying up some flowers which had been tossed about, and broken, many of them, in the night gale, when the keeper came through the gate, leading this Manuel, who, grim as a spectral shadow, that had been fearful but for its exceeding pitifulness, stood now between her and all that she rejoiced in.

"There!" exclaimed Sandy. Looking up, she saw them approaching straight along the path that led past the flower-beds.

"Your flowers had a pretty rough time of it in the storm," said Jailer Laval, as he drew near. He addressed the drummer's daughter,—but his eyes were on Sandy, with the suspicious and stern inquiry common to men who have betrayed a secret. But Sandy was busy with his delving.

"Yes," answered Elizabeth, and she looked from the ground up to the faces of these men.

"Is that a rose-bush? That was roughly handled," said Laval, pointing with his stick to the twisted rose-stalk covered with buds, over whose blighted promise she had been lamenting.

"Yes," said Elizabeth again; but she hardly knew what she said, still less was she aware of the expression her face wore when she looked at the prisoner. Yes, — even as Sandy said, his wrists were chained together; he was more like a ghost than a man; his face was pale and hopeless, and woful beyond her understanding was the majesty of his mien.

At such a price he paid for fights against *the Church!* But in truth he had not the look of an evil, warring man. His gravity, indeed, was such as it seemed impossible to dispel. But only pity stirred the heart of Elizabeth Montier as she looked on him. Surely it was a face that never, in any excess of passion, could have looked malignance. Ah! and at such a price he purchased his sunshine, the fresh air, and a near vision of this flower-garden! —in chains!

When she looked at him, his gaze was on her,—not upon the roses. She smiled, for pity's sake; but the smile met no return. His countenance had not the habit of responding to such glances. Sombre as death was that face. Then Elizabeth turned hastily away; but as the keeper also moved on a step, she detained him with a hurried "Wait a minute," and went on plucking the finest flowers in bloom. Like an iron statue stood the prisoner while she plucked the roses,—it was but a minute's work,—then she tied the flowers together and laid them on his fettered hands; whether he would refuse them, whether the gift pained or pleased him, whether the keeper approved, she seemed afraid to know,—for, having given the flowers, she went away in haste.

It was not long after this first act of friendly courtesy, which had many a repetition,—for the keeper was at bottom a humane man, and not disposed to persecute his charge, while he was equally far from any carelessness in guarding or leniency of treatment that would have excited suspicion as to his purpose, in the minds of the authorities of the island, —not long after this day, when the fine sympathy betrayed for him by Elizabeth fell on Manuel's heart like dew, that the wife of the jailer died.

Her death was sudden and unlooked-for, though neither Nature nor the woman could have been blamed for the shock poor Laval experienced. Death had fairly surrounded her, disarming her at every point, so that when he called her there was no resistance.

Jailer Laval took the bereavement in a remorseful mood. The first thing to be done now was the very last he would have owned to purposing during her lifetime. Release from that prison had been the woman's prayer, year in and year out, these ten years, and Death was the bearer of the answer to that prayer,—not her husband.

But now, from the day of her sudden decease, the prison had become to him dreary beyond endurance. The mantle of her discontent fell on him, and, having

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

no other confidant beside honest, stupid Sandy, he talked to him like a man who seriously thought of abandoning his labor, and retiring to that land across the sea for which his wife had pined during ten homesick years.

Sandy, who might have regarded himself in the light of an "humble instrument," had he been capable of a particle of vanity or presumption, told Elizabeth Montier, with whom he had held many a conference concerning prison matters, since Manuel first began to walk along the southern garden-walk, where the flower-beds lay against the prison-wall. What was her answer? It came instantly, without premeditation or precaution,—

"Then we must take his place, Sandy."

"We, Miss?" said Sandy, with even greater consternation than surprise.

"Yes," she replied, too much absorbed by what she was thinking, to mind him and his blunders,—"papa must take the prison."

"Oh!"—and Sandy blushed through his tan at his absurd mistake. Then he laughed, for he saw that she had not noticed it. Then he looked grave, and wondering, and doubtful. The idea of Adolphus Montier's pretty wife and pretty daughter changing their pretty home for life in the dark prison startled him. He seemed to think it no less wrong than strange. But he did not express that feeling out and out; he was hindered, as he glanced sideways at the young girl who gazed so solemnly, so loftily, before her. At what she was looking he could not divine. He saw nothing.

"I wouldn't be overly quick about that," said he, cautiously.

"No danger!" was the prompt reply.

"For I tell *you*, of all the places I ever see, that prison makes me feel the queerest. I believe it's one reason I let the flower-garden go so long," owned Sandy. He did not speak these words without an effort; and never had Elizabeth seen him so solemn. She also was grave,—but not after his manner of gravity.

"You see what I did with the poor flower-beds, Sandy," said she. "Wait now till you see what happens to the prison."

But it is one thing to purpose, and another to execute. Far easier for Elizabeth to declare than to conduct an heroic design. One thing prevented rest day and night,—the knowledge that Laval's intended resignation must be followed by a new application and appointment. With such a degree of sympathy had the condition of the captive inspired her, that the idea of the bare possibility of cruelty or neglect or brutality assuming the jailer's authority seemed to lay upon her all the responsibility of his future. She must act, for she dared not hesitate.

One evening Adolphus took his horn, and, attended by wife and child, went out to walk. He meant to send a strain from the highest of the accessible coast-rocks. But Elizabeth changed his plan. The time was good for what she had to say. Instead of expending his enthusiasm on a flourish of notes, he was called upon to manifest it in a noble resolution.

When Elizabeth invited her father to a prospect sylvan rather than marine, to the shady path on the border of the wood between it and the prison, Montier, easily drawn from any plan that concerned his own inclination merely, let his daughter lead, and she was responsible for all that followed in the history of that little family. So love defers to love, with divine courtesy, through all celestial movements.

After playing a few airs, Montier's anticipated evening ended, and another set in. The sympathies of a condition, the opposite to that of which he had been so happily conscious, pressed too closely against him. The musician could not, for the life of him, have played with becoming spirit through any one of all the strains of victory he knew.

Near him, under a tulip-tree, sat Pauline, with her knitting in her hand, the image of peace. Not so Elizabeth. She

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was doubting, troubled. But when the bird her father's music moved to sing was still, she spoke, as she had promised herself she would, asking a question, of whose answer she had not the slightest doubt.

"Papa, do you know that Mr. Laval is going away?"

"Why, yes, that's the talk, I believe."

"Will they get somebody to take his place?"

"Of course. There's a prisoner on hand yet, you know,—and the house to look after."

"A big house, too, and dreadful dreary," remarked the mother of Elizabeth. "Laval's wife used to say, when she came up to see me sometimes, it was like being a prisoner to live in that building. And now she's dead and gone, he begins to think the same."

"Suppose we take Laval's place," suggested Montier, looking very seriously at his wife; but the suggestion did not alarm her. Adolphus often expressed his satisfaction with existing arrangements by making propositions of exchange for other states of life, propositions which never disturbed his wife or daughter. They understood these demonstrations of his deep content. Therefore, at these words of his, Pauline smiled, and for the reason that the words could draw forth such a smile Elizabeth looked grave.

"I wish we could, papa," said she.

"You wish we could, you child?" exclaimed her mother, wondering. "It looks so pleasant, eh?" and the fair face of Pauline turned to the prison, and surveyed it, shuddering.

"For the prisoner's sake," said Elizabeth. "Who knows but a cruel keeper may be put in Laval's place? He is almost dead with grief, that prisoner is,—I know by his face. After he is gone, there won't be any prisoner there,—and we could make it very pleasant."

"Pleasant! What do you mean by pleasant?" asked Pauline, inwardly vexed that her child had suggested the question,—and yet too just, too kindly disposed, to put the subject away with imperative refusal to consider it. "I never was in a place so horrid."

"But if it was our home, and all our things were there," urged Elizabeth, "it would be different. It depends on who lives in a house, you know."

"Yes, that is so; it depends a little, but not entirely. It would be more than your mother could do to make a pleasant-looking place out of that prison. You see it is different in the situation, to begin with. Up where we live the sun is around us all day, if it is anywhere; and then the little rooms are so light! If you put a flower into them, you think you have a whole garden. Besides, it's Home up there, and down here it isn't."—Saying this, Adolphus rose up quickly, as though he had a mind to quit the spot.

"When they select a man to fill Laval's place, of course they will be careful to choose one as good and kind," said Pauline, with mild confidence.

"The jailer before him was not good and kind," remarked her daughter.

"They dismissed him for it," said Adolphus, quickly.

"But they said the prisoners were half-starved, and abused every way. It was a good while before it was found out. That might happen again, and less chance of any one knowing it. He is so near dead now, it wouldn't take much to kill him."

No one replied to this argument. Pauline and Adolphus talked of other things, and the musician returned to his music. But all in good time. Elizabeth was capable of patience, and at last her father said, looking around him to make sure that his remark would have only two listeners,—

"That prisoner isn't a man to be talked of about here. You never heard *me* mention him. Laval used to give a—a—bad account of him. He had to be kept alive."

"Till he heard your music, papa, and was moved up to the room with a window. Did he tell you that?" asked Elizabeth.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"He said he thought the music did him good," acknowledged Adolphus.

"May-be it was the same as with Saul when David played for him. But he does not look like a bad man, papa. He looks grander than any of our officers. And he has fought battles, they say. He is very brave."

Both Adolphus and Pauline Montier looked at their daughter with the most profound surprise when she spoke thus. Not merely her words, but her manner of speaking, caused this not agreeable perplexity. Her emotion was not only too obvious, it was too deep for their understanding. The mother was the first to speak.

"How did you hear all this, child? *I* never heard him talked of in this way. They don't talk about him at all, —do they, Adolphus?"

"No," he answered; but he spoke the word very mildly. The tone did not indicate a want of sympathy in the compassion of his daughter.

Elizabeth looked from her mother to her father. What friends had she, if these were not her friends?

"The jailer told Sandy, and Sandy told me," she said. "But they never talk to any other person. Oh! I was afraid to hear about it; but now I have heard, I was afraid not to speak. Would it be so dreadful for you to live here, when we could always have music and the garden? And these woods seem pleasant, when you get acquainted. Day or night I can't get him out of my mind. It is just as if you were shut up that way, papa. I am afraid to be happy when any one is so wretched."

The result was, that Elizabeth's words, and not so much her words as the state of things she contrived to make apparent by them, brought Adolphus Montier to a clear, resistless sense of the prisoner's fate. Over the features of that fate he was for days brooding. Now and then a word that indicated the direction of his thinking would escape him in his wife's hearing. Silently Pauline followed Adolphus to the end of all this thinking. Once she walked alone along the unfrequented road that ran between the prison and the wood, down to the sea; and she looked at the gloomy fortress, and tried to think about it as she should, if certain that within its walls her lot would soon be cast.

And more than once Montier walked home that way; and if it chanced that he had his horn or his drum with him, he marched at quickstep, and played the liveliest tunes, and emerged from the shadows of the wood with a spirit undaunted. He had played for the prisoner, whom he had never yet seen,—but not more for him than for himself.

One Sunday, when the little family walked out together, Adolphus and his wife fell into a pleasant train of thought, —and when they were together, thought and speech were generally simultaneous. As they passed the prison,—for Adolphus had led the way to this path,—Laval was standing in the door. They stopped to speak with him; whereat he invited them into his quarters.

In this walk, Elizabeth had fallen behind her parents. When she saw them going into the prison, she quickened her pace, for her father beckoned to her. But she was in no earnest haste to follow, as became sufficiently manifest when she was left alone.

They had not gone far in their talk, however, when she came to the doorway. Laval, in all his speech, was a deliberate man, and neither Adolphus nor his wife showed any eagerness in the conduct of the conversation now begun. The contrast between the gloom of the apartment and the light and cheerfulness of their own home was apparent to all of them. Elizabeth felt the oppression under which each of the little party seemed to labor, the instant she joined her parents. Susceptible as they all were to the influences of Nature, her sunshine and her shadow, this gloom which fell upon them was nothing more than might have been anticipated.

Jailer Laval was homesick, and innocent of a suspicion of what was passing

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the minds of his guests; he was therefore free in making his complaints, and acknowledged that he was not fit to keep the prison,—it required a man of more nerve than he had. The dread of the place which his poor wife had entertained seemed to have taken possession of him since her death. All the arguments which he once used, in the endeavor to bolster her courage, he had now forgotten. He was very cautious when he began to speak of the prisoner, and tried to divert Adolphus from the point by saying that he would much prefer a house full of convicts to one so empty as this. There was at least something like society in that, and something to do.

Adolphus, in spite of his discontent at hearing merely these deductions of experience, when his desire was to know something special of Manuel, heard nothing of importance. The speech of the jailer on this subject was not to be had. His mind seemed to be wandering, except when his wife, or his native land, was referred to; then he brightened into speech, but never once into cheerfulness. As he sat there in the middle of his chamber, he seemed to represent the genius of the place,—and anything less enlivening or desirable in the way of human life could hardly be imagined. Pauline looked at him and sighed. She looked at Adolphus;—a pang shot through her heart; the shadow of the man seemed to overshadow him. Out of this place, where all appeared to be fast changing into "goblins damned"!

It was she who led the way; but, pausing in the court-yard, Elizabeth evinced still greater haste to be gone, for she ran on with fleet step, and a heart heavy with foreboding as to the result of this interview. She was also impatient to get into the open sunlight, and did not rest in this progress she was making outward till she had come to the sea-shore. Elizabeth Montier was in a state of dire perplexity just then, and if she had been asked whether she would really choose to effect the change proposed in their way of living, it would have been no easy matter for her to discover her mind.

By the sea-shore she sat down, and her father and mother followed slowly on. They were not talking as they came. But as they approached the beach, Adolphus could not resist the prospect before them. Loud was the blast he blew upon his horn, nor did he cease playing until his music had restored him to a more natural mood than that in which the interview with Laval left him. The prison was becoming a less startling image of desolate dreariness to him. And Adolphus was the master-spirit in his family. If he was gay, it was barely possible for his wife or child to be sad. Of the prison not one word was spoken by either. They had not revealed to each other their inmost mind when they went into Laval's quarters; they did not reveal it when they came thence. But as they strolled along the rocky shore, or returned homeward, they thought of little beside the prison and the prisoner. As to Elizabeth, nothing required of her that she should urge the matter further. She had neither heart nor courage for such urging.

It was Adolphus himself who spoke to Pauline the next day, after he had deliberately thrown himself in the way of the prisoner, that he might with his own eyes see what manner of man he was; for seeing was believing.

"Pauline," said he, almost persuaded of the truth of his own words, "you and Elizabeth would make a different place of that prison from what it is now. I should like to see it tried."

Pauline Montier made no haste to answer; she was afraid that she knew what he expected of her.

"Do you see," continued Adolphus, "Elizabeth won't speak of it again? But what must she think of us? He is a man. They say we are all brothers."

"I know it," said, almost sighed, his wife.

"Looking out for our own comfort!" exclaimed Adolphus. "So mighty afraid

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of doing what we'd have done for us! Besides, I believe we could make it pretty pleasant. Cool in summer, and warm in winter. I'd whitewash pretty thorough. And if the windows were rubbed up, your way, the light might get through."

"Poor Joan Laval!" said Pauline. "Body and mind gave out. She was different at first."

"Do you think it was the prison?" asked Adolphus, quickly, like a man halting between two opinions,—there was no knowing which way he would jump.

"Something broke her down," replied his wife. She was looking from one window,—he from another.

"Joan Laval was Joan Laval," said Adolphus, with an effort. "Always was. Frightened at her own shadow, I suppose. But—there! we won't think of it. I know how it looks to you, Pauline. Very well,—I don't see why we should make ourselves miserable for the sake of somebody who has got to be miserable anyhow,—and deserves it, I suppose, or he wouldn't be where he is."

"Poor fellow!" sighed Pauline,—as if it were now her turn on the rack.

Here Adolphus let the matter rest. He had overcome his own scruples so far as honestly to make this proposal to his wife. But he would do no more than propose,—not for an instant urge the point. Surely, that could not be required of him. Charity, he remembered, begins at home.

But Pauline could not let the matter rest here. Her struggle was yet to come. It was she, then, who alone was unwilling to sacrifice her present home for the sake of a stranger and prisoner!

Now Pauline Montier was a good Christian woman, and various words of holy utterance began herewith to trouble her. And from a by no means tranquil musing over them, she began to ask herself, What, after all, was home? Was happiness indeed dependent on locality when the heart of love was hers? Could she not give up so little as a house, in order to secure the comfort of a son of misfortune,—a solitary man,—a dying prisoner? What she would not give up freely might any day be taken from her. If fire did not destroy it, the government, which took delight in interference, might see fit to order that the house they occupied should be used again for the original purpose of storage.

And then the discomforts of the prison began to appear very questionable. She remembered that Joan Laval was, as Adolphus hinted, weakly, nervous, 'frightened at her own shadow,'—a woman who had never, for any single day of her life, lived with a lofty purpose,—a cumberer of the ground, who could only cast a shadow.

She perceived that they would be close to the flower-garden; a minute's walk would lead them to the pleasant woods, —and Pauline Montier always loved the woods.

Indeed, when she began to take this ground, the first steps of occupation alone could be timid or doubtful. After that, her humanity, her sympathy, her confidence in her husband and daughter, drew the woman on, till she forgot how difficult the first steps had been.

She surprised both husband and daughter by saying to Adolphus, the moment she came to her conclusion, that he had better make inquiry of Laval whether he had signified his intention to resign, and forthwith seek the appointment from the Governor of the island.

When Pauline said this, she attested her sincerity by making ready to accompany Adolphus at once to the prison, that they might run no risk of losing the situation by delay. Seeing that they were of one mind, and entirely confiding in each other, they all went together to the prison to consult with Laval. Thus it came to pass, that, before the week ended, the charge of the prison had been transferred to Adolphus Montier.

The family made great efforts in order to impart an air of cheerfulness and home-comfort to their new dwelling-place. Adolphus whitewashed, according

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to promise; Pauline scrubbed, according to nature; they arranged and rearranged their little stock of furniture,—set the loud-ticking day-clock on the mantel-shelf, and displayed around it the china cups, the flower-vase, and the little picture of their native town which Adolphus cut from a sheet of letter-paper some old friend had sent him, and framed with more tender feeling than skill. They did their best, each one, and said to one another, that, when they got used to the place, to the large rooms and high ceilings and narrow windows, it would of course seem like home to them, because—it *was* their HOME. Were they not all together? were not these their own household goods, around them? Still, they needed all this mutual encouragement and heartiness of coöperation which was so nobly, so generously manifested; and it was sincere enough to insure the very result of contentment and satisfaction which they were so wise as to anticipate. But the Governor thought,—*The Drummer is getting ambitious; he wants a big house, and authority!*

Ex-jailer Laval was exceedingly active in assisting his own outgoing and the incoming of Montier. He helped Adolphus in the heavy labors of removal, and laughed more during the conduct of these operations than he had been known to do in years. He said nothing to Prisoner Manuel of the intended change in jail-administration until the afternoon when for the last time he walked out with him.

The information was received with apparent indifference, without question or comment, until Laval, half vexed, and wholly sorrowful for the sad state of the prisoner, said,—

"I am sorry for you, Sir. I can say that, now I'm going off. I've been as much a prisoner as you have, I believe. And I wish you were going to be set free to-night, as I am. I am going home! But I leave you in good care,—better than mine. I never have gone ahead of my instructions in taking care of you. I never took advantage of your case, to be cruel or neglectful. If anything has ever passed that made you think hard of me, I hope you will forgive it, for I can say I have done the best I could or dared."

Thus called upon to speak, the prisoner said, said merely, "I believe you."

Whereat the jailer spoke again, and with a lighter heart.

"I am glad you're in luck this time,—for you are. You don't know who is coming to take the charge,—come, I mean, for they are all in, and settled. That's Montier, the little girl's father. He is a drummer, and a little of everything else. It's his horn that you hear sometimes. And you know Elizabeth, who was always so kind about the flowers. His wife, too, she's a pretty woman, and kind as kind can be."

"What have they come here for?" asked the prisoner, amazed.

"I'll tell you," said Laval, more generous than he had designed to be; but he knew how he should wish, when the sea rolled between him and Foray, that he had spoken every comfortable word in his knowledge to this man; he knew it by his recent experiences of remorse in reference to his buried wife, and was wise enough to profit by the knowledge;—"I'll tell you. It's on your account. They were afraid somebody that didn't know how long you have been here, and how much you have suffered, would get the place; so they all came together and asked for it. They had a pretty little house up nigh the barracks, but they gave it up to come here. You'll see Montier to-night. For when I go back to your room with you, then I'm going off to—to"—— he hesitated, for foremost among his instructions was this, that he should remain silent about his purpose of returning home; he was not to go as a messenger for the prisoner across the ocean to their native land—— "to my business," he said. "If you'll be kind to him, you will make something by it. I thought I would tell you,—so, when you saw a strange face in your room, you would know what it meant without asking."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I thank you," said the prisoner; and to the jailer it now seemed as if the figure of the man beside him grew in height and strength,—as if he trod the ground less feebly and listlessly while he spoke these words. A divine consolation must have strengthened him even then, or he could never have added with such emphasis, "Wherever you go, take this my assurance with you,—you have not been cruel or careless. You have done as well as you could. I thank you for it."

"You don't ask me where I'm going," said the jailer, after a silence that seemed but brief to him,—such a deal of argument he had dispatched, so many difficulties he had overcome in those few moments, whose like, for mental activity and conclusiveness, he had never seen before, and never would see again. "I shall be asked if I have told you. But—where did you come from? Do not tell me your name. But whom did you leave behind you that you would care most should know you are alive and in good hands?"

These questions, asked in good faith, would have had their answer; but while the prisoner was preparing such reply as would have proceeded, brief and wholly to the point, from the confusion of hope and surprise, the Governor of Foray came in sight, drew near, and, suspicious, as became him, walked in silence by the prisoner's side, while Laval obeyed his mute instructions, leading Manuel back to his cell. A vessel was approaching the shore of Foray.

Having disposed of his prisoner, the jailer in turn was marched, like one under arrest, up to the fort, where he remained, an object of suspicion, until his time came for sailing, and, without knowing it, he went home under guard.

When Adolphus Montier ascended to the prisoner's room that night, he found him standing by the window. After Laval left him, he had looked from out that window, and seen the white sail of a vessel; he could not see it now, but there he stood, watching, as though he knew not that his chance of hope was over.

As Adolphus entered the room, the prisoner turned immediately to him,—asking quietly, as if he had not been suddenly tossed into a gulf of despair by the breeze that brought him hope,—

"Has Laval sailed?"

"When the cannon fired," was the answer.

Then Adolphus placed the dish containing the prisoner's supper on the table; he had already lighted the lamp in the hall. And now he wanted to say something, on this his first appearance in the capacity of keeper, and he knew what to say,—he had prepared himself abundantly, he thought. But both the heart and the imagination of Adolphus Montier stood in the way of such utterance as he had prepared. The instant his eyes fell on that figure, lonely and forlorn, the instant he heard that question, his kind heart became weakness, he stood in the prisoner's place,—he saw the vessel sailing on its homeward voyage,—he beheld men stepping from sea to shore, walking in happy freedom through the streets of home;—a vision that filled his eyes with tears was before him, and he was long in controlling his emotion sufficiently to say,—

"We are in Laval's place, Sir, and we hope you will have no cause to regret the change. I don't know how to be cruel and severe,—but I must do my duty. But I wasn't put here for a tyrant."

"I know why you are here; Laval told me," said the prisoner.

"Then we're friends, a'n't we?" asked Adolphus; "though I must do my duty by them that employ me. You understand. I'd set every door and window of this building wide open for you, if I had my way; though I don't know what you're here for. But I swear before heaven and earth, nothing will tempt me to forget my duty to the government;—if you should escape, it would be over my dead body. So you see my position."

"Yes,' said the prisoner; and if anything could have tempted a smile from him, this manner of speech would have

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

done it. But Adolphus was far enough from smiling.

"Come, eat something," said he, with tremulous persuasion. "My wife knows how to get up such things. She will do the best for you she can."

"Thank you."

The prisoner again looked out of the window. It was growing dark; the outline of sea and land was fading out of sight; dreary looked the world without, — but within the lamp seemed shining with a brighter light than usual. And here was a person and a speech, a human sympathy, that almost warmed and soothed him.

He approached the table where Adolphus had spread his supper. He sat in the chair that was placed for him, and the Drummer waited on him, recommending Pauline's skill again, much as he might have presented a petition. The prisoner ate little, but he praised Pauline, and said outright that he had tasted nothing so palatable as her supper these five years. This cheered Montier a little, but still his spirits were almost at the lowest point of depression.

"You seem to pity me," remarked the prisoner, when Adolphus was gathering up the remains of the frugal supper.

"My God!—yes!" exclaimed Adolphus, stopping short, and looking at the man.

It was a sort of sympathy that could not harm the person on whom it was bestowed.

"I consider myself well off to-night," said he, quietly. "It is your little daughter that works in the garden so much? I have often watched her."

"Yes," said Adolphus, almost with a sob.

"And you are the man whose music has been so cheering many a time?"

"I want to know what airs you like best," said the poor Drummer, hurriedly.

"I never heard you play one that I did not like."—Precious praise!

"Then you like music? I can be pretty tolerably severe, Sir, if I make up my mind!" said Adolphus, as if addressing his own conscience, to set that at rest by this open avowal. "There's no danger of my doing wrong by the government. I'd have to pay for you with my life. Yes,—for it would be with my liberty. And there's my wife and child. So you understand where I am, as I told you before; but, by thunder! you shall have all the music you want, and all the flowers; and my little girl can sing pretty well,—her mother taught her. And if you're sick, there a'n't a better nurse in the hospital than Pauline Montier. There! good night!"

Adolphus took up the tray and hurried out of the room,—and forgot to fasten the door behind him until he had gone half way down the stairs. He came back in haste, and turned the great key with half the blood in his body burning in his face, —not merely an evidence of the exertion made in that operation, which he endeavored to perform noiselessly. He was ashamed of this caging business; but he would have argued you out of countenance then and there, had you ventured a word against the government,—though, as he said, he was in the dark concerning the prisoner's crime.

When he went down stairs he found supper prepared, and Pauline and their daughter waiting for him. He sat down in silence, seeking to avoid the questioning eyes which turned toward him so expectant and so hopeful. Discerning his mood, neither wife nor daughter troubled him with questions; at last, of himself, he broke out vehemently,—

"I wouldn't for the world have lost the chance! Laval wasn't the man to take care of that gentleman. But he don't say a word against Laval, mind you. He spoke about the flowers and the music. Oh, hang it!"

Here, in spite of himself, the Drummer was wholly overcome. He bowed his head to the table and broke into violent weeping. Another barrier gave way beside. Elizabeth flew to him. He seemed not to heed her, nor the sudden cry, "Oh, father!" that escaped her. She sat down by his side,—she wept as he was weeping. It was a stormy emo-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion that raged through her heart, when her tears burst forth. She was not weeping for pity merely, nor because her father wept. Long before he lifted his head, she was erect, and quiet, and hopeful, — but a child no more. She was a woman to love, a woman to dare, — fit and ready for the guiding of an angel.

By-and-by Adolphus said to Pauline,—

"If any one else had undertaken this job in our place, we should have deserved to be shut out of heaven for it. Thinking twice about it! I'm ashamed of myself. Why,—why,—he looks like a ghost. But he won't look that way long! We a'n't here to browbeat a man, and kill him by inches, I take it."

"No, indeed!" said Pauline, as if the bare idea filled her with indignation. The three were surely one now.

[To be continued.]

WALDEINSAMKEIT.

I DO not count the hours I spend
  In wandering by the sea;
The forest is my loyal friend,
  Like God it useth me.

In plains that room for shadows make
  Of skirting hills to lie,
Bound in by streams which give and take
  Their colors from the sky,

Or on the mountain-crest sublime,
  Or down the oaken glade,
Oh, what have I to do with time?
  For this the day was made.

Cities of mortals woebegone
  Fantastic care derides,
But in the serious landscape lone
  Stern benefit abides.

Sheen will tarnish, honey cloy,
  And merry is only a mask of sad;
But sober on a fund of joy
  The woods at heart are glad.

There the great Planter plants
  Of fruitful worlds the grain,
And with a million spells enchants
  The souls that walk in pain.

Still on the seeds of all he made
  The rose of beauty burns;
Through times that wear, and forms that fade,
  Immortal youth returns.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The black ducks mounting from the lake,
  The pigeon in the pines,
The bittern's boom, a desert make
  Which no false art refines.

Down in yon watery nook,
  Where bearded mists divide,
The gray old gods that Chaos knew,
  The sires of Nature, hide.

Aloft, in secret veins of air,
  Blows the sweet breath of song;
Ah! few to scale those uplands dare,
  Though they to all belong.

See thou bring not to field or stone
  The fancies found in books;
Leave authors' eyes, and fetch your own,
  To brave the landscape's looks.

And if, amid this dear delight,
  My thoughts did home rebound,
I should reckon it a slight
  To the high cheer I found.

Oblivion here thy wisdom is,
  Thy thrift the sleep of cares;
For a proud idleness like this
  Crowns all life's mean affairs.

THE GERMAN POPULAR LEGEND OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS.

We doubt whether any popular legend has ever taken deeper root among the common people and spread farther in the world than the story of Dr. Faustus and his reckless compact with the Evil One. We do not intend to compare it, of course, to those ancient traditions which seem to have constituted a tie of relationship between the most distant nations in times anterior to history. These are mostly of a mythological character, —as, for instance, those referring to the existence of elementary spirits. Their connection with mankind has, in the earliest times, occupied the imagination of the most widely different races. A certain analogy we can easily explain by the affinity of human hearts and human minds. But when we find that exactly the same tradition is reëchoed by the mountains of Norway and Sweden in the ballad of "Sir Olaf and the Erlking's Daughter," which the milkmaid of Brittany sings in the lay of the "Sieur Nann and the Korigan," and in a language radically different from the Norse, —when, here and there, the same *forms* of superstition meet us in the ancient pop-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ular poetry of the Servians and modern Greeks, which were familiar to the Teutonic and Cambrian races of early centuries,—must we not believe in a primeval intimate connection between distant nations? are we not compelled to acknowledge that there must have existed, in those remote times, means of communication unknown to us?

We repeat, however, that, in calling the legend of Dr. Faustus the most widely-spread we know of, we cannot allude to these primitive traditions, the circulation of which is perfectly mysterious. We speak of such popular legends as admit of their origin being traced. Among these the Faustus-tradition may be called comparatively new. To us Americans, indeed, whose history commences only with the modern history of Europe, a period of three hundred years seems quite a respectable space of time. But to the Germans and the Scandinavians, from whose popular lore the names of Horny Siegfried and Dietric of Berne, (Theodoric the Great,) and of Roland, are not yet completely erased, a story of the sixteenth century must appear comparatively modern.

The popularity of the legend of Faustus, although of German origin, was, almost from its first rise, not confined to German lands. The French, Dutch, and English versions of the poor Doctor's adventurous life are but very little younger than his German biographies; and it was about the same time that he was made the subject of a tragedy by Marlowe, one of the most gifted of Shakspeare's dramatic predecessors. We are not afraid of erring, when we ascribe the uncommon popularity and rapid circulation of this legend principally to its deep and intrinsic *moral* interest. Faustus's time of action was exactly the period of the great religious reformation which shook all Europe. During the sixteenth century, even the untaught and illiterate classes learned to watch more closely over the salvation of their souls than when they felt themselves safe beneath the guardianship of the Holy Mother Church. And to those who remained under the guidance of the latter, the dangers of learning and independent thinking, and of meddling with forbidden subjects, were pointed out by the monks with two-fold zeal. It cannot, therefore, surprise us, that the life and death of a famous contemporary, who for worldly goods and worldly wisdom placed his soul at stake, excited a deep and general interest. In one feature, indeed, his history bears decidedly the stamp of the great moral revolution of the time: we mean its awful end. There are two legends of the Middle Ages—and perhaps many more—in which the fundamental ideas are the same. The two Saints, Cyprianus, (the "Magico Prodigioso" of Calderon,) and Bishop Theophilus, (the hero of Conrad of Würzburg,) were both tempted by the Devil with worldly goods and worldly prosperity, and allured into the pool of sin perhaps deeper than Faustus; but repentance and penitence saved them, and secured to them finally a place among the saints of the Church. But for Faustus there is no compromise; his awful compact is binding; and whatever hope of his salvation modern poetry has excited for the unfortunate Doctor is, to say the least, in direct contradiction of the popular legend.

Faustus was the Cagliostro of the sixteenth century. It is not an easy task to find the few grains of historical truth referring to him, among the chaff of popular fiction that several centuries have accumulated around his name. A halo so mysterious and miraculous surrounds his person, that not only have various other famous individuals, who lived long before or after him, been completely amalgamated with him, but even his real existence has been denied, and not much over a hundred years after his death he was declared by scholars to be a mere myth. A certain J. C. Duerr attempted to prove, in a learned "Dissertatio Epistolica de Johanne Fausto," (printed at Altorf, in 1676,) that the magician of that name had never existed, and that all the strange things which had been

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

related of him referred to the printer John Faust, or Fust,—who had, indeed, been confounded with him before, although he lived nearly a century earlier. And when we think of the superstitious fear and monkish prejudice with which the great invention of printing was at first regarded, such a confusion of two persons of similar name, and both, in the eyes of a dark age, servants of Satan, cannot surprise us. Our John Faustus was also sometimes confounded with two younger contemporaries, one of whom was called Faustus Socinus, and made Poland the chief theatre of his operations; the other, George Sabellicus, expressly named himself Faustus Junior, also Faustus Minor. Both were celebrated necromancers and astrologers, who probably availed themselves of the advantage derived from the adoption of the famous name of Faustus.*

A second attempt to prove the historical nonentity of Dr. Faustus was made at Wittenberg, in the year 1683. Some of his popular biographers had claimed for him a professorship at that celebrated university, or at least brought him into connection with it,—a pretension which the actual professors of that learned institution thought rather prejudicial to their honor, and which they were desirous of seeing refuted. Stimulated, as it would seem, by a zeal of this kind, J. G. Neumann wrote a "Dissertatio de Fausto Præstigiatore," in which he not only tried to prove that Dr. Faustus had never been at Wittenberg, but pronounced his whole story fabulous. An attempt like this would not surprise us in our own time, the age of historical skepticism; but the seventeenth century gave credit to narratives having much slighter foundation. Although this dissertation was full of historical mistakes and erroneous statements, it made some sensation, as is proved by its four successive editions. It was also translated into German. All Neumann's endeavors, however, could not stand against the testimony of contemporaries, who partly had known Faustus personally, partly had heard of him from living witnesses, and allude to his death as an occurrence of recent date.

* Some regard Sabellicus and Faustus Socinus as one and the same person.

John Faustus, or rather, after the German form of his name, Faust, was born in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, probably not before the year 1490. According to the oldest "Volksbuch" (People's Book) which bears his name,* his parents then lived at Roda, in the present Duchy of Saxe-Weimar. The same place is likewise named as his native village by G. R. Widmann, his first regular biographer, who says that his father was a peasant.† Although these two works are the foundation of the great number of later ones referring to the same subject, some of these latter deviate with respect to Faustus's birthplace. J. N. Pfitzer, for instance, who, seventy years after Widmann, published a revised and much altered edition of his book, makes Faust see the light at Saltwedel, a small town belonging then to the principality of Anhalt, and must have had his reasons for this amendment. A confusion of this kind may, indeed, have early arisen from a change of residence of our hero's parents during his infancy. But the oldest Volksbuch was written nearly forty years after the death of Faustus, and Widmann's work appeared even ten years later,—both, indeed, professing to be founded on the Doctor's writings, as well as on an autobiographical manuscript, discovered in his library after his death. Perhaps, however, the assertion of two of his contemporaries, one of whom was personally acquainted with him, is more entitled to credit in this respect. Joh. Manlius and Joh. Wier—the latter in his biography of Cornelius Agrippa—name Kundlingen, in Würtemberg, as his birthplace.

* *Historie von D. Johann Fausten, den weltbeschreyten Zauberer und Schwarzkünstler*, etc. Frankfurt a. M. 1588.

† *Wahrhaftige Historien von den greulichen und abscheulichen Sünden und Lastern*, etc., *so D. Johannes Faustus*, etc., *bis an sein schreckliches End hat getrieben*, etc., erklärt durch Georg Rudolf Widmann. Hamburg, 1599.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Manlius, in his work, "Collectanea Locorum Communium," (Basel, 1600,) speaks of him as of an acquaintance. He says that Faustus studied at Krakow, in Poland, where there was a regular professorship of Magic, as was the case at several universities. Others let him make his studies at Ingolstadt, and acquire there the honors of a Doctor of Medicine. Both these statements may be true, as also that he was for some time the companion and pupil of Cornelius Agrippa, of Nettesheim, the celebrated scholar, whose learning and mysterious researches after the philosopher's stone brought him, like many other wise men of the age, into suspicion of witchcraft. Agrippa had a pet dog, black, like the mystical companion of Dr. Faustus, and, in the eyes of a superstitious multitude, like him, the representative of the Evil One. Black dogs seem to have been everywhere considered as rather suspicious creatures. The Pope Sylvester II. had also a favorite black poodle, in whom the Devil was supposed to have taken up his abode. According to Wier, however, Agrippa's black dog was quite a harmless beast, and remarkable only for the childlike attachment which the great philosopher had for him. It may be worth remarking, that this writer, although he speaks of Faustus in his biography of Agrippa, makes no mention of his ever having been a friend or scholar of the latter.

In several of the old stories of Faustus, we read that he had a cousin at Wittenberg, who took him as a boy to his house, brought him up, and made him his heir when he died. If this was true, it would be more probable that he was a native of Saxony than of Suabia. It is, however, more probable that this narrative rests on one of the numerous cases found in old writings in general, and above all in the history of Faustus, in which the names Wittenberg and Würtemberg are confounded. Our hero's abode at the former place was very probably merely that of a traveller; he left there, as we shall soon see, a very unenviable reputation. It is true that Saxony was the principal scene of the Doctor's achievements; but this very circumstance makes it improbable that he was born and brought up there, as it is well known that "a prophet hath no honor in his own country."

Faust's studies were not confined to medicine and the physical sciences. He was also considered eminent as a philologist and philosopher. Physiology, however, with its various branches and degenerate offshoots, was the idol of the scholars of that age, and of Faustus among the rest. A passionate desire to fathom the mysteries of Nature, to dive into the most hidden recesses of moral and physical creation, had seized men of real learning, and seduced them into mingling absurd astrological and magical fancies with profound and scholarlike researches. The deepest thinkers of their time, like Nostradamus, Cardan, Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, Thomas Campanella, flattered themselves that they could enter, by means of art and science, into communion with good or evil spirits, on whose aid they depended for obtaining knowledge, fame, wealth, and worldly honors and enjoyments. Faustus was one of those whom a passion for inquiry, in league with a powerful, sensual nature, led astray. What had been originally an honest thirst for knowledge, a deep interest in the supernatural, became gradually a morbid craving after the miraculous, the pretension of having attained the unattainable, and the attempt to represent it by means of vulgar jugglery.

Dr. Faustus seems at first to have settled as a practising physician, and at this period of his life Wagner appears as his *famulus;* for we never find this *Philister* among scholars as a companion of the travelling Faustus, although his connection with him was apparently lasting. According to the popular legend, the Doctor made him his heir, and expressly obtained for him Auerhahn, (Heathcock,) a familiar spirit in the shape of a monkey. This was a sort of caricature of Mephistopheles, who became, through his ludi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

crous clumsiness, a pet-devil of the populace in the puppet-shows, particularly in Holland. Widmann calls Wagner *Waiger;* while in all other publications referring to him he bears his right name, Christoph Wagner.

What city it was where Faustus lived before the reputation of witchcraft made him the subject of so much talk remains unsettled. Wittenberg and Ingolstadt are alternately named. Some of his biographers relate, that he led a loose and profligate life, and soon wasted his cousin's inheritance. Others represent him as a deep, secluded student, laying hold of one science after another, and unsatisfied by them all, until he found, by means of his physical and chemical experiments, the secret path to the supernatural, and, in order to reap their full fruits, allied himself with the hellish powers. Faustus himself tells us, in his "Mirakel-, Kunst-, und Wunder-buch," (or rather, the author of this book makes him tell us,) how his intercourse with the Devil commenced almost accidentally and against his intentions:—

"I, Doctor Johann Faust, who apply myself to the Free Arts, having read many kinds of books from my youth, happened once to light upon a book that contained various conjurations of the spirits. Feeling some desire to enlarge my ideas on these things, having, indeed, at the beginning, small belief that the prescriptions of that book would so soon be verified, I tried them only for an experiment. Nevertheless, I became aware that a mighty spirit, named Astaroth, presented himself before me, and asked me wherefore I had cited him. Then, hurried as I was, I did not know how to make up my mind otherwise than to demand that he should be serviceable to me in various wishes and desires, which he promised *conditionale*, asking to make a compact with me. To do this I was at first not inclined; but as I was only provided with a bad *circle*, being merely experimenting, I did not dare to bid him defiance, but was obliged to yield to the circumstances. I therefore made up my mind, inasmuch as he would serve me, and would be bound to me a certain number of years. This being settled, this spirit presented to me another, named Mochiel, who was commanded to serve me. I asked him how quick he was. Answer: 'Like the wind.' 'Thou shalt not serve me! get thee back to whence thou camest!' Now came Aniguel; he answered, that he was as quick as the bird in the air. 'Thou art still too slow,' I replied; 'begone!' At the same moment a third stood before me, named Aziel; this one, too, I asked how quick he was. 'Quick as the thought of man.' 'Right for me! thee will I keep!' And I accepted him. This spirit has served me long, as has been made known by many writings."

Whether it was this quick Aziel, or Astaroth himself, who became Faustus's travelling-companion under the name of Mephistopheles, or whether the prince of the lower regions in person condescended to play that part, we do not know; but in all popular stories of the Doctor, his servant bears the latter name, —while in the various books in which, under the name of *Hoellenzwang*, the system of his magic is laid down, he is called Aziel.

In possession of such a power, Faustus soon became tired of his lonely study. He craved the world for his theatre. His travels seem in reality to have been very extensive, while in the popular stories a magic mantle carried him over the whole globe. Conrad Gesner, the great physiologist, who speaks of him with some respect as a physician, comparing him with Theophrastus Paracelsus, reckons him among the *scholastici vagantes*, or *fahrende Schueler*, an order of men already considerably in the decline, and grown disreputable at that period. As early as the thirteenth century, we find the custom in Germany, of young clergymen who did not belong to any monkish order travelling through the land to get a living,—here by instructing in schools for a certain period,—there by temporarily serving in churches

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as choristers, sacristans, or vicars,—often, too, as clerks and copyists to lawyers or other private men. When they could no longer find a livelihood at one place, they went to another. Their offices became, in course of time, of the most varied and unsuitable order. They were generally received and treated with hospitality, and this may have been one reason why all kinds of adventurers were ready to join them. Their unstable mode of life easily explains their frequenting the society of other vagabonds, who traversed the country as jugglers, treasure-diggers, quacks, or sorcerers, and that their clerical dignity did not prevent their occasionally adopting these professions themselves. The Chronicle of Limburg, in speaking of the Diet of Frankfurt in 1397, says: "The number of princes, counts, noblemen, knights, and esquires, that met there, amounted to five thousand one hundred and eighty-two"; adding: "Besides these, there were here four hundred and fifty persons more, such as *fahrende Schueler*, wrestlers, musicians, jumpers, and trumpeters." The character of the clergy having sunk so low, the Church declared itself against the custom, and at several German councils theological students were expressly forbidden to lead this roving life. It required, however, considerable time for the ancient custom to become extinct, and we learn, among others, from Conrad Gesner, that it still existed at the time of the Reformation.

The part played by Faustus was at first in some degree respectable, and that of a scholar. An old Erfurt Chronicle tells us that he had come to that city and obtained permission from the university to deliver a course of lectures on Homer. A dark rumor of his magic powers had preceded him; the students, therefore, thronged to hear him, and, deeply interested, requested him to let them see the heroes of Homer by calling them from their graves. Faustus appointed another day for this, received the excited youths in a dark chamber, commanded them to be perfectly silent, and made the great men of the Greek bard rise up, one by one, before their eyes. At length Polyphemus appeared; and the one-eyed Cyclops, with his red hair, an iron spear in his hand, and, to designate him at once as a cannibal, two bloody human thighs in his mouth, looked so hideous, that the spectators were seized with horror and disgust, the more so that the wily magician professed to have some difficulty in dismissing the monster. Suddenly a violent shake of the whole house was felt; the young men were thrown one over another, and were seized with terror and dismay. Two of the students insisted upon having already felt the teeth of the Cyclops.—This ridiculous story was soon known throughout the city, and confirmed the suspicions of the Franciscan monks and magistrates, that the learned guest was in league with the Evil One. It is said that Faustus had previously offered to procure for them the manuscripts of the lost comedies of Terence and Plautus, and to leave them for a short time in their hands, to be copied,—but that the fathers of the city and of the university declined, because they believed this could be done only by sorcery, or with the help of Satan. Now they sent to him the Guardian of the Convent, Dr. Klinger, in order to convert him and to have masses read for him, for the purpose of delivering him from his hellish connection. But Faustus opposed, was by the clergy solemnly delivered to the Devil, and, in consequence, banished from the city by the magistrates.

We do not know whether it was for similar juggleries, that, when at Wittenberg, the Elector John the Steadfast ordered him to be arrested, as Manlius relates. He saved himself by flight. Melancthon, in one of his letters, mentions having made his acquaintance; the whole tone of the allusion, however, expresses contempt.

The character of the miracles he performed soon ceased to have the literary tincture of the one related above, and they became mere vulgar juggleries and exhibitions of legerdemain, suited to the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

taste of the multitude. Scholars turned their backs on him, and we find him only among tipplers and associates of the lowest kind. At one of their carousals his half-intoxicated companions asked him for a specimen of his witchcraft. He declared himself willing to gratify them in any request. They then demanded that he should make a grape-vine full of ripe fruit grow out of the table around which they sat. Faustus enjoined complete silence, ordered them to take their knives and keep themselves in readiness for cutting the fruit, but not to stir before he gave them leave. And, behold, before the eyes of the gaping youths, while they themselves were enveloped in a magic mist, there arose a great vine, with as many bunches of grapes as there were persons in the room. Suddenly the obscuring mist dissolved, and each one saw the others with their hands at their own noses, ready to cut them off, as the promised grapes. But the vine and the magician had disappeared, and the disenchanted drunkards were left to their own rage.

The reader will be aware that this is the tale of which Goethe availed himself in representing Faustus's visit to Auerbach's cellar at Leipzig. Whether it really occurred there is not stated; but that Faustus was said to have been at Leipzig, and even in Auerbach's cellar, is an historical fact, attested by two pictures still extant at this famous old tavern, where many of our curious American travellers may have seen them. These pictures, which have been retouched and renovated more than once,—last in 1759, —are marked at the top with the date 1525. Whether this means the year in which they were painted, or that in which Faustus performed the great feat which the scene represents, remains uncertain. As it occurred in the beginning of his career, upon which we may assume him to have entered somewhere between 1520 and 1525, the date is quite likely to refer to the time of the feat; but, to judge from the costumes and several other signs, the pictures cannot have been painted much later. They were evidently made expressly for the locality, sloping off on both sides at the top, to suit the shape of the vault. The German inscription at the foot of one of the pictures indicates that it was written after the Doctor's death, which must have occurred between 1540 and 1550; but it is probable that these verses were added at a later time, the more so as the traces of an older inscription, now no longer legible, may still be discovered. One of these curious paintings represents Faustus in company with students and musicians sitting around a table covered with dishes and bottles. Faustus is lifting his goblet with one hand, and with the other beating time on the table to the music. At the bottom we read the following verse in barbarous Latin:—

"Vive. Bibe. Obgregare. Memor Fausti hujus. et hujus
Pœnæ. Aderat claudo hæc. Ast erat ampla Gradu. 1525." *

The other picture shows us the same jolly party risen from table, and all expressing their wonder and astonishment, as Dr. Faustus is just riding out of the door on a wine-tub. Beneath it is the following inscription in German:—

"Dr. Faustus zu dieser Frist
Aus Auerbach's Keller geritten ist,
Auf einem Fass mit Wein geschwind,
Welches gesehn manch Mutterkind.
Solches durch seine subtilne Kunst hat gethan,
Und des Teufels Lohn empfangen davon. 1525." †

On neither of the two pictures does Mephistopheles appear, unless he is meant to be represented in the shape of the black dog. It is not, however, Goethe's

* Live, drink, and be merry, remembering this Faust and his punishment. It came slowly, but was in ample measure. 1525.

† Dr. Faustus on this day
From Auerbach's cellar rode away,
Of a barrel of wine astride,
Which many mothers'-children eyed;
This through his subtle art achieved,
And for it the Devil's reward received.
1525.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

poodle that meets us here, but a sleek little creature with a collar around his neck, looking very much like a wooden toy-dog.

Most of the tricks and pranks reported of Dr. Faustus are of the same absurd kind, though not all of so harmless a character. According to the popular legend, he travelled like a great lord, had the spirits pave the highways for him when he rode in the post-coach,—it seems, then, that he did not always use his mantle,—and lived in the taverns at which he stopped with an unheard-of luxury. On his departure, he paid the hosts in a princely manner; but scarcely was he out of sight, when the gold in the receiver's hand was changed to straw, or to round slices of gilded horn,—a shabby trick indeed, as he could have as much money as he liked.

How much we have to believe of all these popular stories we may learn from Dr. Phil. Begardi's "Zeyger der Gesundtheyt," (Guide to Health,) a book published in 1539, at Worms, at a time when Faustus seems to have already disappeared from Germany, after having lost caste there completely, and when he was trying his fortune in other countries.

"There is still another famous man," says Begardi, "whose name I would rather not mention at all, only that he himself would not wish to remain hidden or unknown. For he was roving, *some years ago*, through all the different countries, principalities, and kingdoms, and has made known his name and his great skill, boasting not only of his medical science, but likewise of Chiromancy, Necromancy, Physiognomy, Visions in Crystals, and more arts of the kind. And he called himself Faustus, a celebrated experienced master, *philosophum philosophorum*, etc. But the number of those who have complained to me of having been cheated by him is very great. Well, his promises were likewise very great, just like those of Thessalus, (in Galen's time,) and his reputation like that of Theophrastus; but in deeds he was, I hear, found small and deceitful. But in taking and receiving money he was never slow, and was off before any one knew it."

Thus we see the historical Faustus, the esteemed scholar, the skilful physician, gradually merged in the juggler, the quack, the adventurer, and the impostor. The popular legend follows him to foreign countries. His magic mantle carries him, in eight days, over the whole world, and even into the infernal regions. He is honorably received at the Emperor's court at Innspruck, introduces himself invisibly at Rome, into the Vatican, where the Pope and his cardinals are assembled at a banquet, snatches away his Holiness's plate and cup from before his mouth, and, enraged at his crossing himself, boxes his ears. In the puppet-shows he figures mostly at the court of the Duke of Parma. In Venice his daring spirit presumed too far. He announced an exhibition of a flight to heaven. But Mephistophèles, who had hitherto satisfied his most extravagant demands, though often with grumbling, would not permit *that* feat. In the midst of a staring, wondering multitude, Faustus rose to a certain height by means of his own Satanic skill, acquired in his long intercourse with the Devil. But now the latter showed that he was still his master. He suddenly hurled him from on high, and he fell half dead upon the ground. The twenty-four years of the compact, however, were not yet ended, and he was therefore restored to life by the same hellish power.

In a very trite, popular ballad, which we find in "Des Knaben Wunderhorn," we see, that, when the travellers came to Jerusalem, the Devil declined still another request. Faustus wishes him to make a picture of Christ crucified, and to write under it his holy name. But the Devil declared that he would rather give him back his signature than be obliged to do *such* a thing, and succeeded in turning the Doctor's mind from the subject by showing him, instead, a picture of Venus.

Popular imagination seems to have

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been inexhaustible in stories of this kind. But, after the twenty-four years of vile enjoyments, the hour of retribution came at last. According to our scanty historical notices, Faustus died an unnatural death: he was found dead in his bed, at his birthplace, Kundlingen, with his neck twisted. How such a death must have confirmed all the superstitious rumors about him the reader will easily conceive. But, according to the popular legend, his end was still more terrible. He seems to have returned to his own country, and scholars, worthy young men, surround him once more, and become much attached to him. From this one would suppose him to have been at Wittenberg, or Ingoldstadt, or any university city, but, instead of this, we find him in a little Saxon village, called Rimlich. The twenty-fourth year draws to its close. At last, at the eleventh hour, Faustus bethinks himself to repent; but it is too late. His end, related in the simple language of the Volksbuch, is truly awful. He dismisses his sympathizing friends, bidding them not to be disturbed by any noises in the night. At midnight a terrible storm arises; it reaches its height amid thunder and lightning. The friends hear a fearful shriek. They rise and pray. But when, in the morning, they enter his room, they are horror-struck at seeing his limbs scattered round, and the walls, against which the fiend had dashed him to pieces, covered with his blood. His body was found in the court-yard on a dung-hill.

The horror of this end made a peculiarly awful impression on the popular mind. During the Thirty Years' War, it once happened that a troop of Catholic soldiers broke into a village in Saxony, on the Elbe, named Breda. They were just about to plunder one of the principal houses, when the judge of the place, who, it seems, was a shrewd man, stepped out and told them that this village was the one where Dr. Faustus was carried off by the Devil, and that in this very house the blood of the Doctor was still to be seen on the walls. The soldiers were seized with terror, and left the village.

The story of Faustus's adventurous life and shocking death, with its impressive lessons, appears at first to have been kept extant only by oral tradition. Nearly forty years passed before it was written down and printed. But then, indeed, the book was received with so much favor, that not only several new and enlarged editions appeared in a short time, but many similar works were published soon after, which, though founded on the oldest Volksbuch (of 1588) and Widmann's "Histories," were yet abundant in new facts and inventions. And that not to the illiterate classes alone was the subject interesting is proved by the circumstance that a Latin version of the first Volksbuch was advertised, and (probably) appeared. On the title-pages of all these books it is expressly stated that they were written as a warning to, and for the edification of, Christian readers. In 1712, a book was published at Berlin, under the title, "Zauberkünste und Leben Dr. Fausti," (The Magic Arts and Life of Dr. Faust,) as the author of which Christoph Wagner was named. Wagner himself became the subject of a biographical work.

Of still greater effect was Faustus's history on the stage. Through the whole of the seventeenth, as well as the first half of the eighteenth century, it remained one of the favorite subjects of puppet-shows, popular melodramas, exhibitions of *ombres chinoises*, and pantomimes. The more the awful event, with its moral lessons, receded into the background of time, the more it lost its serious and impressive character, until it became a mere burlesque, and *Hanswurst* and *Casperle* its principal figures.

The "Historie" had scarcely appeared, when it was translated into Dutch, and the later publication of other similar works did not prevent the demand for several new editions. These Dutch books were illustrated, as were also the *newer* German ones. Only a little later, two French versions were published, one

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of which was even reprinted at Paris as late as 1712.

In Holland, our hero excited no small interest even among the artists. There are extant several portraits of Faustus painted by Rembrandt, — whether ideal, or copied from older pictures, is not known. Another Dutch painter, Christoph von Sichem, represented two scenes from the life of the celebrated magician; and of these productions engravings still exist. On the one, we see Faustus and Mephistopheles,—the latter dressed like a monk, as, according to the popular tales, he mostly appeared. On the other, Wagner and Auerhahn, (or Auerhain,) —the latter in the shape of a monkey. There is a striking contrast between Faustus and Wagner. The first is a well-dressed man, in deep meditation; globes and instruments of science surround him; — the other the impersonation of vulgarity. Various scenes from Faustus's life adorn the walls. Christoph von Sichem was born in 1580, and flourished at Amsterdam during the first quarter of the seventeenth century. These pictures were consequently made when the whole interest of the public for Faustus and his companions was still fresh.

Some books seem to have been published by Faustus during his lifetime,—at least, his biographers allude to them; but it was only after his death that the work which gave his name its chief reputation became known. This was his peculiar System of Magic, called "Faust's Hoellenzwang" (Compulsion of Hell). Wagner, who was said to be his heir, published it first under the title of "Dr. Johannis Faust's *Magia Celeberrima*, und *Tabula Nigra*, oder *Hoellenzwang*." It contained all the different forms of conjuration, as well for the citation as for the dismissal of spirits. There are, besides this, several other similar works extant, such as his "Schwarzer Mohrenstern," "Der schwarze Rabe," the "Mirakel-, Kunst-, und Wunder-buch," already mentioned, and several more, containing about the same matter, and most of them written in his name. Of all these productions only manuscripts are known to remain, although they are all professedly copies of printed works. The most singular thing is, that, while they are represented as having been published after the magician's death, some of them are, nevertheless, marked with dates as early as 1509, 1510, and 1511, — and with the names of Lion, (Lyons,) London, etc., as the places where they were printed. These circumstances make their authenticity very doubtful, even if we allow for mistakes made by the copyists.

Although so large a part of Faustus's life was, according to the popular legend, spent in Italy, we are not aware that this legend was ever current among the Italian people. Some unfortunate attempts have been made to engraft the story of Don Giovanni upon this German stock, but, as it seems to us, by very arbitrary arguments and conclusions. The career of a mere rake, who shuns no means of gratifying his low appetites, has little analogy with that of an originally honest inquirer, led astray by the want of faith and his sensual nature. The only resemblance is in the end. There was at first more apparent success in the endeavor to transplant the tale to Spain, where Calderon's "Magico Prodigioso" was taken by some critics for a representation of it. The foundation of Calderon's drama, as mentioned before, is rather the legend of St. Cyprianus. More may be said in favor of the radical identity of the stories of Faustus with some popular legends of the Poles, referring to a necromancer called Twardowski. But Polish scholars will not admit this; at least, they object to giving up their great magician, and some attempts have even been made from that side to prove that theirs is the original whom the Germans appropriated under the name of *Faust*.

The most interesting result of the publication of the Volksbuch appeared in England, where it fell, for the first, and in a hundred and fifty years the only time, into the hands of a poet. Mr. Collier, in his "History of English Dramatic

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Poetry," says,—"In 1588, a ballad of the Life and Death of Dr. Faustus was licensed to be printed"; and adds,—"This would, according to the language of the time, have meant any composition in verse, even the play," (of Marlowe,) and subsequently mentions the same circumstance with reference to "the old romance of Dr. Faustus." On this, Mr. A. Dyce (Works of Christopher Marlowe, 1850, I. p. xvi., note) remarks,—"When Mr. Collier states that the old romance of Faustus was entered into the Stationers' books in 1588, (according to a note on Henslowe's Diary, p. 42,) he meant, I apprehend, the old *ballad*." If we bear in mind that the first German History of Dr. Faustus did not appear before the same year, we should also conclude that he must have meant the ballad, as a translation could hardly have been made in so short a time. But considering, on the other hand, that the tragedy, which cannot have been composed later than 1589 or 1590, (as the poet, who was murdered in 1593, wrote several pieces after the one in question,) is evidently and without the least doubt founded on the Volksbuch, often adopting the very language of its English version, we must conclude that a translation of the German work was made immediately after its appearance, or possibly even from the manuscript,—which Spiess, the German editor, professes to have obtained from Spires. Although the word "ballad" was not properly employed for prose romances, it may have been thus used in Henslowe's Diary by mistake. We are not aware that any *old* English version of this "History of Dr. Faustus" is now extant; that from which Mr. Dyce quotes is of 1648. Marlowe's tragedy was first entered in the Stationers' books in 1600–1, but brought upon the stage many years before. In 1597, it had already been played so often that additions were required. Philips, who wrote about fifty years later, remarks, that, "of all that Marlowe hath written to the stage, his 'Dr. Faustus' has made the greatest noise with its devils and such-like tragical sport." In course of time it was "made into a farce, with the Humors of Harlequin and Scaramouch," and represented through the whole kingdom, like similar compositions, with immense applause.

Marlowe's "Faustus" has been judged rather favorably by modern English critics. Mr. Hazlitt calls it, "though an imperfect and unequal performance, Marlowe's greatest work. Mr. Hallam remarks,—"There is an awful melancholy about Marlowe's Mephistopheles, perhaps more impressive than the malignant mirth of that fiend in the renowned work of Goethe." Charles Lamb even preferred Marlowe's "Faustus," as a whole, to the latter! Mr. Collier calls it "a drama of power, novelty, interest, and variety." So, indeed, it is; but all that power, interest, novelty, and variety do not belong to Marlowe, but to the prose romance, after which he wrote. Indeed, he followed it so closely,—as every reader can see for himself, by reading the play in Dyce's edition, and comparing it with the notes under the text,—that sometimes whole scenes are copied, and even whole speeches, as, for instance, that of the Emperor Charles V. The coarse buffoonery, in particular, of which the work is full, is retained word for word. Of the countless absurdities and prolixities of the Volksbuch, Marlowe has, of course, omitted a great deal, and condensed the story to the tenth part of its original length; but the fundamental idea, the plot, and the characters, belong exclusively to the original. Marlowe's poetical merit lies partly in the circumstance that he was the first to feel the depth and power of that idea, partly in the thoughts and pictures with which some speeches, principally the monologues of Faustus himself, are interwoven. The Faustus of Marlowe is the Faust of the legend, tired of learning because it is so unproductive, and selling his soul, not for knowledge, but for wealth and power. His investigating conversations with Mephistopheles, his inquiries, and the answers of the latter, are almost

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as shallow and childish as those in the People's Book; and Faustus himself remarks, on the information which his companion gives him,—

> "These slender trifles Wagner could decide;
> Has Mephistopheles no greater skill?"

This latter, indeed, seems to us, in spite of the admiration of English critics, a decided failure. There is in him no trace of either the cruel, icy-cold malignity of the fiend of Goethe, or the awful grandeur of Milton's Tempter. It cannot be said that Marlowe's Devil seduces Faustus. He is almost on the verge of repentance himself; of the two, he is decidedly the better Christian. The proposition of the compact comes from Faustus himself, and Mephistopheles only accepts it. Marlowe's Faustus knows nothing of the feeling of aversion and disgust with which Goethe's Faust sees himself bound to his hellish companion; he calls him, repeatedly, "sweet Mephistopheles," and declares,—

> "Had I as many souls as there be stars,
> I'd give them all for Mephistopheles."

Mr. Hallam, in comparing Marlowe's production with Goethe's, remarks,—"The fair form of Margaret is wanting." As if this were all that was wanting! Margaret belonged, indeed, exclusively to Goethe. But Helena, the favorite ideal of beauty of all old writers, is introduced in the popular tale, and so, too, in Marlowe. Faustus conjures up her spirit at the request of the students. Her beauty is described with glowing colors; "it would," says the old romance, "nearly have enflamed the students, but that they persuaded themselves she was a spirit, which made them lightly passe away such fancies." Not so Faustus; although he is already in the twenty-third year of his compact, he himself falls in love with the spirit, and keeps her with him until his end. In all this, Marlowe follows closely; though he has good taste enough to suppress the figure of the little Justus Faustus, who was the fruit of this union.

It now only remains to us to consider the way in which modern poets have apprehended the idea of the Faust-fable. None of the German dramas and operas which the seventeenth century produced, though they never failed to draw large audiences, could be compared, in poetical value, to Marlowe's tragedy. The German stage of that period was of very low standing, and the few poets who wrote for it, as, for instance, Lohenstein, preferred foreign subjects,—the more remote in space and time, the better. The writers of neither the first nor the second Silesian school were exactly the men to appreciate the depth of a legend like that of Faustus,—still less the watery poets of the beginning of the eighteenth century. Lessing, who, with his sharp, sound criticism, and his clear perception of the beautiful, led the way to a higher state of things in literature, appears also to have been the first to discover the deep meaning buried in the popular farces of Faustus. He pronounced it worthy the genius of a Shakspeare, and himself attempted to make it the subject of a tragedy. How much it occupied his mind we may conclude from the circumstance that he seems to have made for it two plans, essentially different from each other. We can only regret that they were never executed. Although Lessing was not a poetical genius like Goethe, the power and acuteness of his mind were so eminent, the force of his critical faculties was so penetrating, that his treatment of a subject of so much depth and intrinsic poetry would have been of the highest interest. This expectation is also justified by the few sketches of single scenes which are all that remain of his plans. One of the latter is, indeed, also in so far remarkable, as we see from it that Lessing's mind inclined to the modern view, according to which Faustus ought to be and would be finally saved. One of the devils describes him, before temptation, as "a solitary, thinking youth, entirely devoted to wisdom,—living, breathing, only for wisdom and knowledge,—renouncing every passion but the one for truth,—highly dangerous to thee [Satan] and to us all, if he were ever to be a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

teacher of the people." Satan resolves at once to seduce and destroy him. But Faustus's good angel has mercy on him. He buries him in a deep sleep, and creates in his place a phantom, with which the cheated devils try successfully the whole process of temptation and seduction. All this appears to Faustus in a dream. He awakes; the Devil discovers his error, and flies with shame and fury, and Faustus, thanking Providence for its warning, clings to truth and virtue more firmly than ever.

The other plan, to judge from the fragment we possess, is less fanciful, and seems to follow more closely the popular tradition, according to which the temptations of Faustus were by no means external, but lay deep in his individual mind. In one of its lightly-sketched scenes, the poet has evidently availed himself of the one from the Miracle-Book heretofore mentioned, and, indeed, with a great deal of force. Faustus, impatient and annoyed at the slow process of human action, desires the quickest servant from hell, and successively cites seven spirits. One after another he rejects. The arrows of the plague, the wings of the winds, the beams of light, are all not quick enough for him. The fifth spirit rises:—

"*Faustus.* How quick art thou?

"*Fifth Spirit.* As quick as the thoughts of men.

"*Faustus.* That is something!—But the thoughts of men are not always quick. They are slothful when truth and virtue demand them. Thou canst be quick, if thou wilt. But who will warrant me thy being always quick?—No, I trust thee as little as I ought to have trusted myself.—Ah!—(to the sixth spirit.) Now tell me how quick thou art!

"*Sixth Spirit.* As quick as the vengeance of the Avenger.

"*Faustus.* Of the Avenger? Of what Avenger?

"*Sixth Spirit.* Of the All-powerful, the Terrible, who has kept vengeance for himself alone, because vengeance is his delight.

"*Faustus.* Devil, thou blasphemest, for I see thou art trembling!—Quick, thou sayest, as the vengeance of——no! he may not be named among us! Quick, thou sayest, is his vengeance? Quick? And I still live? And I still sin?

"*Sixth Spirit.* That he suffereth thee still to sin is the beginning of his vengeance.

"*Faustus.* Oh that a Devil should teach me this!—But no, his vengeance is not quick; if thou art no quicker, begone!—(To the seventh spirit.) How quick art thou?

"*Seventh Spirit.* Unsatisfiable (*unzuvergnuegender*) mortal! If I, too, am not quick enough for thee ——

"*Faustus.* Tell me, then, how quick?

"*Seventh Spirit.* No more nor less than the transition from Good to Evil.

"*Faustus.* Ha! thou art my devil! Quick as the transition from Good to Evil!—Yes, that is quick! Nothing is quicker!—Away from here, ye horrors of Orcus! Away!—Quick as the transition from Good to Evil!—I have learned how quick that is! I know it!"

Lessing had this fragment printed in the "Literaturbriefe," professedly as a specimen of one of the old popular dramas, despised at that time by the higher classes, though Lessing remarks,—"How fond was Germany once of its Dr. Faustus,—and is so, partly, still!" But even this bold reformer of German taste seems not to have had the temerity to come forward at once as the author of a conception so entirely contrary to the reigning rules and the Frenchified taste by which, at the period of the "Literaturbriefe," (1759–1763,) Germany was still subjugated.

We do not know whether some of the young poets who took hold of the subject a short time after were instigated by this fragment of Lessing's, or whether they were moved by the awakening German Genius, who, just at that period, was beginning to return to his national sources for the quenching of his thirst. Between 1770 and 1780, Lenz and Maler Müller composed, the former his "Hoellenrichter," the latter his dramatized Life of Dr. Faustus. No more appropriate hero could have been found for the young "Kraft-Genies" of the "Sturm und Drang Periode" (Storm and Stress period) of German literature. Schreiber, Soden, Klinger, Schink, followed them, the last-named with several productions referring to the subject. In 1786, Goethe communicated to the world,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for the first time, a fragment of that astonishing dramatic poem which has since been acknowledged, by the whole literary public, as his masterpiece, and the most remarkable monument of his great genius.* The whole first part of the tragedy, still under the name of a fragment, was not published before 1808. Since then Germany may be said to have been inundated by "Fausts" in every possible shape. Dramas by Nic. Voigt, K. Schoene, Benkowitz,—operas by Adolph Bäurle, J. von Voss, Bernard, (with music by Spohr,)—tales in verse and prose by Kamarack, Seybold, Gerle, and L. Bechstein,—and besides these, the productions of various anonymous writers, followed close upon each other in the course of the next twenty years. Chamisso's tragedy of "Faustus," "in one actus," in truth only a fragment, had already appeared in the "Musenalmanach" of 1804.

To Goethe the legendary literature of his nation had been familiar from his boyhood. Very early in life, and several years before the publication of Maler Müller's spirited drama, his mind was powerfully impressed by the Faust-fable, and the greater part of the present fragmentary poem was already written and ready for print when Müller's first sketch, under the title, "Situations in the Life of Dr. Faustus," appeared (1776). As the entire poetry of Goethe was more or less *autobiographical*,—that is, as all his poetical productions reflect, to a certain extent, his own personal sensations, trials, and experiences,—he fused himself and his inner life into the mould of Faustus, with all his craving for knowledge, his passionate love of Nature, his unsatisfied longings and powerful temptations, adhering closely in all external action to the popular story, though of course in a symbolic spirit. Goethe had, as he tells us himself, a happy faculty of delivering himself by poetical production, as well of all the partly imaginary, partly morbid cares and doubts which troubled his mind, as of the real and acute sufferings which tormented him, for a certain period, even to agony. Love, doubt, sorrow, passion, remorse—all found an egress from his soul into a poem, a novel, a parable, a dramatic character, or some other form of poetical expression. He felt as if eased of a burden, after having thus given his feelings body and shape. Thus his works became his history. "Faust," in its two parts, is the production of his lifetime. Conceived in early youth, worked out in manhood, completed in old age, it became a vehicle for all the various commotions of his existence. There is no other poem which contains such a diversity of thought and feeling, such a variety of sentences, pictures, scenes, and situations. For enlarging on the poetical value of this incomparable work this is not the place. Closely as Goethe has followed up the popular legend, it is emphatically and entirely his own production, because it contains his complete self.

Nearly a quarter of a century passed before this extraordinary poem was followed by its second part. It is not difficult to trace in this continuation, published only after the death of the aged poet, the few scenes which may have been composed contemporarily with or soon after the first part; but that the whole is conceived and executed in a totally different spirit not even the most unconditional admirers of Goethe's genius will deny. There is no doubt that he regarded his "Faust" only as a beginning, and always contemplated a continuation. The *rôle* of Dr. Faustus, the popular magician, was only half-played. Its most brilliant part, his intercourse with the great of the earth and the heroes of the past, had not yet commenced. But as, in the course of advancing life, the poet's views and ideas changed, the mirror of his soul reflected an altered world to him; and as the second part of "Faust" is hardly less an image of himself than the first, it is not unnatural that it is as different from the latter as the Goethe the septuagenarian was from Goethe the youth.

Meanwhile the *literati* of Germany

* It first appeared in the fourth volume of his Works. Leipzig. Goeschen. 1786.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

became exceedingly impatient for the promised second part; and when the master lingered, and did not himself come forth with the solution of the mystery, the disciples attempted to supply him as well as they could. C. C. L. Schoene and J. D. Hoffmann had both the requisite courage for such an undertaking; and the first even sent his production, with perfect *naïveté*, to the great master, as the second part of his own work. C. Rosenkranz and Gustav Pfitzer—two very honorable names—also wrote after-plays.

We must confess that we have never felt any desire to see "Faust" continued. It ought to have remained a fragment. Its last scene, perhaps, surpasses, in sublimity and heart-rending power, anything ever written. No light of this world can ever entirely clear up the sacred mystery of the Beyond, but that scene gives us a surety for the salvation of Margaret, and *hope* for Faust, to every one who has not forgotten the words of the Lord in the second Prologue:—

"Draw down this spirit from its source,
And, *canst thou catch him*, to perdition
Carry him with thee in thy course;
But stand abashed, if thou must needs confess
That a good man, though passion blur his vision,
Has of the right way still a consciousness." *

By the appearance of the second part of "Faust" the magic spell was completely broken. No work of Art of a more chilling, disenchanting character was ever produced. For the striking individuality of the first part, we have here nothing but abstractions; for its deep poetry, symbolism; for its glow and thrilling pathos, a plastic finish, hard and cold as marble; for its psychological truth, a bewildering mysticism. All the fine thoughts and reflections, and all the abundance of poetical passages, scattered like jewels through the thick mist of the whole work, cannot compensate for its total want of interest; and we doubt whether many readers have ever worked their way through its innumerable obscure sayings and mystical allegories without feeling something of the truth of Voltaire's remark: "*Tout genre est permis hors le genre ennuyeux.*"

The impression which the first part of "Faust," the poetical masterpiece of German literature, made among foreigners, was, though in some instances ultimately powerful, yet on the whole surprisingly slow. While the popular legend, in its coarsest shape, had, in its time, spread with the rapidity of a running fire through all countries, the great German poet's conception of it, two hundred years later, found no responding echo in either French or English bosoms. Here and there some eccentric genius may have taken it up, as, for instance, Monk Lewis, who, in 1816, communicated the fundamental idea to Lord Byron, reading and translating it to him *vivâ voce*, and suggesting to him, in this indirect way, the idea of his "Manfred." But even the more profound among the few German scholars then extant in England did not understand "Faust," and were inclined to condemn it,—as, for instance, Coleridge, who, as we see from his "Table-Talk," misconceived the whole idea of the poem, and found fault with the execution, because it was different from what he fancied he himself would have made of this legend, had he taken it in hand. The first English translation was published in the same year as the first French version, that is, in 1825; both were exceedingly imperfect. Since then several other translations in prose and verse have appeared in both languages, especially in English,—though the "twenty or thirty metrical ones" of which Mr. C. T. Brooks speaks in his preface are probably to be taken as a mere mode of speech,—and lately one by this gentleman himself, in our very midst. This latter comes, perhaps, as near to perfection as it is possible for the reproduction of all idiomatic poetical composition in another language to do. All this indicates that the time for the just appreciation of German literature in general

* Mr. Brooks's translation.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and of Goethe in particular is drawing near at last; that its influence has for some time been felt is proved, among other things, by that paraphrastic imitation of "Faust," Bailey's "Festus."

That a poem like "Faust" could not at first be generally understood is not unnatural. Various interpretations of its seeming riddles have been attempted; and if the volumes of German "Goethe-Literature" are numerous enough to form a small library, those of the "Faust-Literature" may be computed to form the fourth part of it. To the English reader we cannot recommend highly enough, for the full comprehension of "Faust," the commentary on this poem which Mr. Lewes gives in his "Life of Goethe," as perhaps the most excellent portion of that excellent work. Goethe himself has given many a hint on his own conception, and as to how far it was the reflex of his own soul. "The puppet-show-fable of 'Faust,'" he says, "murmured with many voices in my soul. I, too, had wandered into every department of knowledge, and had returned disgusted, and convinced of the vanity of science. And life, too, I had tried under various aspects, and had always come back sorrowing and unsatisfied." "Faust's character," he says in another place, "at the height to which the modern elaboration (*Ausbildung*) of the old, crude, popular tale has raised it, represents a man, who, feeling impatient and uncomfortable within the general limits of earth, esteems the possession of the highest knowledge, the enjoyment of the fairest worldly goods, inadequate to satisfy his longings even in the least degree,—a mind which, turning to every side in search of this satisfaction, ever recedes into itself with increased unhappiness."—He remarks, too, that "the approbation which this poem has met with, far and near, may be owing to the rare peculiarity, that it fixes permanently the developing process of a human mind, which by everything that torments humanity is also pained, by all that troubles it is also agitated, by what it condemns is likewise enthralled, and by what it desires is also made happy." *

If this article were devoted to Goethe's "Faust," instead of the popular legend of Faustus, of which the former is only the most eminent apprehension, it would be easy to add to these reasons for the universal "approbation" which it has won still others, founded on the great genius of the poet. This, however, would by far exceed our limits.

* *Kunst und Alterthum.* B. VI. Heft I., II.

MISS WIMPLE'S HOOP.

"Believe in God and yourself, and do the best you can."

In Hendrik on the Hudson, fifty miles from New York, there was, winter before last, a certain "patent seamless."—

But a hooped skirt with a history, touching and teaching, is no theme for flippancy; so, by your leave, I will unwind my story tenderly, and with reverential regard for its smooth turns of sequence.

The Wimples, of whom Sally is the last, were among the oldest and most respectable of Hendrik families. Sally's father, Mr. Paul Wimple, had been a publisher in good standing, and formerly did a flourishing business in New York; but seven years ago he failed, and so, quite penniless, his health sadly broken, his cheerfulness and energy all gone with his fortunes, without heart for any new beginning, he returned to Hendrik, his native place.

There, the friends of his youth, stead-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fast and generous, pitying his sad plight, and having perfect faith in his unimpeached integrity, purchased — principally at the sale in bankruptcy of his own effects—a modest stock of new and second-hand books and magazines, together with some stationery and a few fancy articles in that line, and reëstablished him in the humble but peaceful calling of a country bookseller. They called his shop "The Hendrik Athenæum and Circulating Library," and all the county subscribed; for, at first, the Wimples were the fashionable charity, "the Wimples were always so very respectable, you know," and Sally was such a sweet girl that really it was quite an interesting case. Mrs. Splurge forthwith began improving the minds of her girls to the extent of three full annual subscriptions for Josephine, Adelaide, and Madeline respectively; and that triplet of fair students, who, separately or conjointly, were at all times competent to the establishment of a precedent for the graceful charities of Hendrik good society, handsomely led off with a ten-dollar investment in "fountain" pens, "cream-laid assembly note," motto-wafers, Blessington envelopes "with crest and initial," ivory tablets, pencil-sharpeners, and ink-erasers.

But all their munificence came to nought. Mr. Paul Wimple's heart was broken,—as they say of any weary Sysiphus who lies down by his stone and sleeps forever;—so he died.

Poor little Sally! The first thing she did was to disappoint her friends, and shock the decencies of Hendrik; for it had been agreed on all sides that "the poor dear thing would take on dreadfully, or else fret herself into fits, or perhaps fall into one of them clay-cold, corpsy swoons, like old Miss Dunks has regular every 'revival.'" But when they came, with all their tedious commonplaces of a stupid condolence not wholly innocent of curiosity, Sally thanked them with dry eyes and prudent lips and quiet nerves, and only said she thought she should do very well after she had set the house to rights and slept awhile. The sewing-circle of that week was a coroner's inquest on Sally's character, and "ungrateful," "cold-blooded,' "indecent," "worse than a hypocrite," were not the hardest epithets in the verdict of the jury.

But Sally set the place to rights, and bade her father's old friends to the funeral, and buried him with all the money that was in the house, neither asking nor accepting aid from any; and with the poor pittance that her severe conscience could afford her sorrow she procured some cheap material of the doleful sort and went into the most unbecoming of "full mourning." When she made her appearance in church,—which she did, as usual, the very first Sunday after the funeral,—that plainest of bonnets and straitest of black delaines, unadorned save by the old-fashioned and dingy lace-cape, descended through many shifts of saving from her long-ago-dead-and-gone mother, were so manifestly a condescending concession to the conventionalities or superstitions of Hendrik, and said so plainly, "This is for your 'decencies,'—it is all that I can honestly spare, and more than you should demand,—my life is mourning enough,"—that all the congregation bristled at the affront. Henceforth Miss Wimple—no longer dear Sally, or even Miss Sally, but sharp "Miss Wimple"—had that pew to herself.

Now I believe it was not generally known in Hendrik that Miss Wimple had narrowly escaped being a very pretty girl. She was but just in her nineteenth year when her father died. Her features were regular, her expression lovely, her complexion, before trouble nipped the roses of her cheeks, full of the country's freshness. She had tender eyes, profoundly overshadowed by long, pensive lashes; in the sweet lines of her very delicate mouth a trace of quiet pride was prettily blended with thoughtfulness, and a just-forming smile that was always melancholy. Her feet were little, and her hands were soft and white; nor had toil and sorrow, and the weariness, and indifference to self, that come of them,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as yet impaired the symmetry of her well-turned shape, or the elasticity of her free and graceful carriage. Her deportment was frank and self-reliant, and her manners, though reserved, far from awkward; her complete presence, indeed, compelled consideration and invited confidence.

In her father's lifetime, she had sought, on occasions of unwonted cheerfulness, to please him with certain charming tricks of attire; and sometimes, with only a white rose-bud gleaming through the braided shadows of her hair, lighted herself up as with a star; then, not a carping churl, not an envious coquette in Hendrik, but confessed to the prettiness of Sally Wimple.

But now there was no longer a grateful life for her white rose-star to brighten; so she sat down, in her loneliness and sombre unbecomingness, between her forlorn counters with their pitiful shows of stock, and let her good looks go by, entertaining only brave thoughts of duty,—till she grew pale "and fell into the portion of weeds and outworn faces," so that "how anybody could see the least beauty in that distressing Miss Wimple" began to be with many a sincere and almost reasonable expression of surprise, instead of a malicious sin against knowledge. She waited for customers, but they seldom came,—often, from opening to window-barring, not one; for the unwilting little martyr of the Hendrik Athenæum and Circulating Library had made herself a highly disapproved-of Miss Wimple by her ungrateful and contumacious behavior at her father's death, even if the hard and sharp black lines of that scrimped delaine had not sufficed to turn the current of admiration, interest, and custom. Besides, the attractions of her slender stock were all exhausted. She had not the means of refreshing it with pretty novelties and sentimental toys in that line,—with albums and valentines, fancy portfolios and pocket-secretaries, pearl paper-knives and tortoise-shell card-cases, Chinese puzzles and *papier-maché* checker-boards. Nor was the Library replenished "to keep up with the current literature of the day"; its last new novel was a superannuated dilapidation; not one of its yearly subscribers but had worked through the catalogue once and a half.

Since the funeral, and especially since the inauguration of the delaine, Mrs. Marmaduke Splurge had been less alive to the necessity of improving the minds of her girls; and that virginal ten-dollar investment had provided Josephine, Adelaide, and Madeline with supplies of small arms and ammunition enough for a protracted campaign of epistolary belligerence, interrupted by hair-strokes of coquettish diplomacy.

In the flaunting yellow house on the hill the widow and daughters of the late Marmaduke Splurge, Esq., railroad-director and real-estate broker, fondled and hated each other. Mrs. Marmaduke was a well-preserved woman, stylish, worldly-minded, and weak. Miss Josephine, her eldest, was handsome, patronizing, *passée*, and a sentimental fool; Miss Adelaide, who came next, was handsome, eccentric, malicious, and sly; and Miss Madeline, the youngest, was handsome, distinguished-looking, intellectual, passionate, and proud.

Mrs. Marmaduke's heart was set on marrying her daughters "advantageously," and she gave all of her narrow mind to that thankless department. Josephine insisted on a romantic attachment, and pursued a visionary spouse with all the ardor and obstinacy of first-rate stupidity. Adelaide had the weakness to hate Josephine, the shrewdness to fear Madeline, and the viciousness to despise her mother; she skilfully and diligently devoted herself to the thwarting of the family. Madeline waited, only waited,—with a fierceness so dangerously still that it looked like patience,—hated her insulting bondage, but waited, like Samson between the pillars upon which the house of Dagon stood, resolved to free herself, though she dragged down the edifice and were crushed among the wreck.

Mrs. Marmaduke talked tediously of the trials and responsibilities of conscientious mothers who have grown-up daughters to provide for, was given to frequent

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

freshets of tears, consumed many "nervous pills" of the retired-clergyman-whose-sands-of-life-have-nearly-run-out sort, and netted bead purses for the Select Home for Poor Gentlemen's Daughters. Josephine let down her back hair dowdily, partook recklessly of poetry and pickles, read inordinately in bed,—leaning all night on her elbow,—and was threatened with spinal curvature and spiritualism. Adelaide set invisible little traps in every nook and cranny, every cupboard and drawer, from basement to attic, and with a cheerful, innocent smile sat watching them night and day. Madeline, fiercely calm, warned off the others, with pale lips and flashing eyes and bitter tongue, resenting *en famille* the devilish endearments she so sweetly suffered in company; but ever as she groped about in her soul's blindness she felt for the central props of that house of Dagon.

All the good society of Hendrik said the Splurges were a charming family, a most attached and happy family, lovely in their lives and in death not to be divided, and that they looked sweetly in hoops. And yet the Splurges had but few visitors; the young women of the neighborhood, when they called there, left always an essential part of their true selves behind them as they entered, and an ornamental part of their reputations when they took their departure; nor were the young men partial to the name, —for Josephine bored them, and Adelaide taunted them, and Madeline snubbed them, and Mrs. Marmaduke pumped them, and the combined family confounded them. Only Mr. Philip Withers was the intimate and encouraged *habitué* of the house.

Mr. Philip Withers was the very man for the looser principles of Hendrik,—a fine gentleman's fine son, and his only one, who, by the death of his father, had come, whilst he was yet very young, into a pretty property in the neighborhood,—a sort of idyllic man of the world, with considerable cleverness, a neat miscellaneous education, handsome person, effective clothes, plausible address, mischievous brilliancy of versatile talk, a deep voice, two or three accomplishments best adapted to the atmosphere of sentimental women, graceful self-possession, small feet, nice hands, striking attitudes, a subduing smile, magnetic whisper, Machiavellian tact, and French morals. He could sing you into tears, and dance you into love, and talk you into wonder; when he drew, you begged for his portrait by himself, and when he wrote, you solicited his autograph.

Mr. Philip Withers had taken his moustache to foreign parts, and done the Continent sophisticatedly. He was well-read in cities, and had brought home a budget of light, popular, and profusely illustrated articles of talk on an equivocal variety of urban life, which he prettily distributed among clovery pastorals, Wordsworthian ballads, De Coverly entertainments, Crayon sketches, and Sparrowgrass Papers, for the benefit of his country subscribers. From all of which you have no doubt gathered by this time that Mr. Philip Withers was a graceful scamp, and a friend of the Splurges,—who had money, which Mr. Philip Withers had not; for he had been a munificent patron of elegant pleasures abroad, and since his return had erected an addition to his father's house in the shape of a pair of handsome mortgages, as a proprietor of romantic tastes in architecture might flank his front door with mediæval donjons.

Mrs. Marmaduke made much of that good-looking and delightful Withers. Though not a pious man, in the formal sense of the term, she felt sure he was religious according to that stained-glass and fragrant religion of the tastes which is an essential attribute of every gentleman,—that is, of every well-born man of cultivated preferences and sensitive antipathies,—and she had no doubt that gentlemen's souls could be saved by that arrangement just as satisfactorily, and so much more gracefully. She only wished, my dear, you could hear Mr. Withers express himself on those subjects,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

—his ideas were so delightfully—"your deal, my love"—clear, his illustrations so sweetly pretty, and his manner so earnest; really, he stirred her like—"hearts, did you say?—a trump."

Josephine Splurge contented herself with letting down her back hair for Mr. Withers and making eyes at him.

"Good-morrow to the guileless Genevieve!"—Withers delighted in dispensing equivocal nothings to the dowdy Muse of the sofa and back hair.—"Charming weather!"

"There, you bewildering Joseph Surface, you need not go on,—I know what you are going to say, and I will neither be flattered nor fascinated. Come, confess now, like a dear candid creature, throw off your irresistibly bewitching mask, and own that your sentiments are all rhetoric."

"Josy, dear," Adelaide would insinuate, "what a wonderful memory you have!—so well managed, too! Now whom *did* you hear say that?"

Josephine was wont to declare that the Admirable Crichton lived again in that kaleidoscopic creature; but he was so dazzling, so bewildering, so dangerous, that to converse with him was like having fireworks in one's boudoir.

With Madeline Withers was on strange terms, if any terms at all. She threatened to him in the middle of his best stories, smiled quietly when he preached, yawned to his poetical recitations, left the room when he sang, mistook the subjects of his sketches with a verisimilitude of innocence that often deceived even himself, was silent and sneered much whenever he was present. And all these rudenesses she performed with a successful air of genuine abstraction; they never failed of their intention by being overdone, or by being too *directly* directed at him.

Remarks seldom passed between these two; when they did, Withers spoke always first, and Madeline replied briefly and with politeness. And yet there were occasions when a sharp-sighted and suspicious observer might have detected a strange discomposure in Madeline's conduct in the presence of Withers,—when, indeed, she seemed to be laboring under irritability, and proneness to singular excitement, which began with his entrance and disappeared with his departure. At such times she would break her haughty quiet with fierce sallies upon her sisters; but Withers stung her back into silence with sharp and telling retorts,—as you may have seen a practised beast-tamer in a cage flog an angry tigress, when her eyes flashed, and her ears were set back, and she unsheathed her horrid claws, and lashed her sides, and growled with all the appalling fee-faw-fum of the jungle,—flog her back into her corner, with nought more formidable than a lady's riding-whip, dainty, slender, and sharp. But Withers administered the chastisement with such devilish grace that it was unperceived, save by the quick, shrewd Adelaide perhaps, who perceived everything,—but never *saw*, nor ever spoke. If you could have beheld the lips and the eyes of Madeline, on such occasions, you would have cursed this Philip Withers, or beaten him to her feet.

Between Withers and Adelaide the relations were plainer; indeed, before the small Splurge set they appeared as avowed lovers. Toward "Addy" Withers was all elegant devotion and gracious gallantry, knight-like in his chivalric and debonair devoir.

For Withers Addy was, openly, all deference and tenderly wistful solicitude, but in secret not all security and exultation. Even while it seemed high triumph in her heart's camp, her well-drilled eyes and ears were still on guard, and her hidden thoughts lay upon their arms.

Still it wore the aspect of a lyric match, and the hearts of humbler Hendrik lovers set it to music.

"For other guests," Withers seemed to say,

"I wile the hours with tale or song,
Or web of fancy, fringed with careless rhyme;
But how to find a fitting lay for thee,
Who hast the harmonies of every time?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And Addy *looked*,

"Thou art to me most like a royal guest,
Whose travels bring him to some humble roof,
Where simple rustics spread their festal fare,
And, blushing, own it is not good enough.

"Bethink thee, then, whene'er thou com'st to me,
From high emprise and noble toil to rest,
My thoughts are weak and trivial, matched with thine,
But the poor mansion offers thee its best."

So Mrs. Marmaduke exalted her horn and exceedingly magnified her manœuvring office. On the strength of it, she treated herself to profuse felicitations and fished among her neighbors for more.

CHAPTER II.

And now I will let you into a secret, which, according to the received rules for story-construction, should be barred against you yet a little longer. I will fling it wide open at once, instead of holding it ajar and admitting you edgewise, as it were, one conjecture at a time.

Miss Wimple had a lover;—she had had him since six months before her father died, and the decayed publisher had never guessed of him nor Sally confessed him; for the good, thoughtful daughter knew it would but complicate the old man's perplexities and cares to no purpose. To be sure, his joyful consent was certain; but so long as he lived, "the thing was not to be thought of," she said, and it was not wise to plant in his mind a wish with which her duty could not accord. So Sally's lover was hushed up,—hidden in discretion as in a closet.

Simon Blount was his name, and he was a young farmer of five hundred acres in first-rate cultivation, with barns, stables, and offices in complete repair,—a well-stocked, well-watered place, with "all the modern improvements," and convenient to the Hendrik branch of the New York and Bunker Hill railroad.

The young man had inherited this very neat property from his father,—a thriving, intelligent farmer of the best class, Mr. Wimple's oldest friend, his playmate in boyhood, and his crony when he died. Simon's mother and Sally's had likewise been schoolmates, and intimates to the last, fondly attached to each other, and mutually confiding in each other's love and truth in times of pain and trouble.

But Mr. Blount and Mrs. Wimple had been dead these ten years;—they died in the same month. Simon and Sally were children when that happened, and since then they had grown up together in the closest family intimacy, interrupted only by Sally's winter schooling in New York, and renewed every summer by her regular seasons at Hendrik.

To the young man and the ripening maiden, then, their love came as naturally as violets and clover-blooms, and was as little likely to take their parents or the familiar country-folk by surprise.

When Simon took trips to New York, he "stopped" at Mr. Wimple's, and Sally's summer home in Hendrik was always "Aunt Phœbe's," as she had been taught to call Simon's mother.

You will wonder, then, that Mr. Paul Wimple should have blushed and struggled and died in the forlorn little "Athenæum," and that Sally should sit down in her loneliness and "that fright of a delaine" to wait for customers that came not, when in their old friends' house were comfortable mansions, and in their old friends' hearts tearful kisses and welcome free as air. But you must remember that with sudden poverty comes, often, shrinking pride, and a degree of suspicion, and high scorn of those belittled pensioners who hang upon old ties; that old age, when it is sorely beset, is not always patient, clear-sighted, and just; that, when the heart of a young girl, in Sally's extremity, carries the helpless love that had been clad in purple, and couched in eider, and pampered with bonny cates, and served in gold, to Pride, and asks, "Stern master, what shall I do with this now?" the answer will be, "Strip it of its silken fooleries,—let it lie on the ground, the broad bosom of its honest, hearty mother,—teach it the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wholesomeness of brown bread and cresses, fairly earned, and water from the spring,—and let it wait on itself, and wait for the rest!" Once, when the talk at the Splurge house descended for a moment from its lofty flights to describe a few eccentric mocking circles around the Hendrik Athenæum and Miss Wimple, Madeline said, "If you have sense or decency, be silent;—the girl is true and brave, every way better taught than we, and prouder than she knows. If we were truly as scornful of her as she is indifferent to us, we would let her glorious insignificance alone."

So Miss Wimple waited in her shabby little shop and plied her needle for hire. Her lover was a handsome fellow, with a bright, frank face, and a vigorous, agile, and graceful form; there was more than common intellect in his clear, broad brow, overhung with close clusters of brown country curls; taste was on his lips and tenderness in his eyes; his soul was full of generosity, candor, and fidelity; his every movement and attitude denoted native refinement, and in his talk he displayed an excellent understanding and remarkable cultivation; for his father had bestowed on him superior advantages of education;—"as fine a young fellow, Sir," that estimable old Doctor Vandyke would say, "as ever you saw."

It was true, Simon's travels had never reached beyond New York; but, unlike Mr. Philip Withers, he had brought home solid comforts, useful facts, wholesome sentiments, natural manners, and sensible, but modest conversation,—instead of an astonishing variety of intellectual curiosities and intricate moral toys, whereat plain people marvelled—as in the case of a certain ingenious Chinese puzzle, ball within ball, all save the last elaborately carved—how the very diminutive *plain* one at the centre ever got in there, or ever could be got out.

In another respect the young farmer enjoyed a noticeable advantage over the man-of-the-world;—he was quite able to tear down those fancy donjon additions, and erect a plain, honest, substantial, very comfortable, and very cheerful Yankee porch on their site.

But Miss Wimple said to Simon,—"For a season you will keep aloof from this place and from me. I must see you no oftener than it would be allowable for an occasional customer of the better sort to drop in; and when you do come, state your business—let it always be *business*, or pass by—and take your leave, like any indifferent neighbor who came to change a book, or purchase a trifle, or engage work. On these terms our love must wait, until by my own unaided exertions—without help, mark you, Simon, from any man or woman on earth—I have discharged the debt of charity that is due to the good people of this place who helped my father in his utmost need, and gave him this shop and these things in trust. From you, of all men, Simon, I will accept no aid. Play no tricks of kindness upon me; nor let your love tempt you to experiment, with disguised charity, upon my purpose. You would only find that you had failed, and ruined all. The proceeds of this poor shop must belong to those whose money procured it, until I shall have paid its price; on no pretext shall that fund be touched for other purposes. I will sustain myself independently; you know that I ply a nimble needle, and that my handiwork will be in esteem among the richer folks of Hendrik. And now, dear Simon, let me have my way. You need no more earnest assurance of my love than the pains I would take, in this matter, to make you respect me more. When my task is done, I will deck myself as of old, and again light up the rose-star in my hair, and stand in the door and clap my hands to call you hither, and hold you fast; but not till then. Let me have my way till then."

And Simon said,—"You are wiser than I, Sally, and braver, and every way better. I will obey you in this, and wait,—the more cheerfully because I shall be always at hand, and, if your heart should fail you, I know you will not refuse my aid, nor prefer another's to mine."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And so they passed for mere acquaintances; and there were some who said—Philip Withers among them—that "that plausible Golden Farmer, young Blount, had treated the forlorn thing shabbily."

About that time hoops came in, and the Splurge girls flourished the first that appeared in Hendrik.

One day, as Miss Wimple sat in a low Yankee rocking-chair, sewing among her books, she was favored with the extraordinary apparition of Miss Madeline Splurge, — her first visitor that day, whether on business or curiosity.

"I wish to procure a small morocco pocket-book, Miss Wimple, if you keep such things."

Miss Wimple, with a slight bow of assent, took from a glass counter-case a paper box in which was a miscellaneous assortment of such articles; there were five or six of the pocket-books. Madeline selected one,—a small, flexible affair, of some dark-colored morocco lined with pink silk. She paid the trifle the shy, demure little librarian demanded, and was taking her leave in silence, without even a "Good-day," when, as she was passing the door, Miss Wimple espied on the counter, near where her customer had stood, a visiting-card; her eye fell on the engraved name,—"Mr. Philip Withers"; of course Miss Splurge had dropped it unawares. She hastened with it to the door,—Madeline had just stept into the street,—

"This card is yours, I presume, Miss Splurge?"

Madeline turned upon her with a surprised air, inquiringly,—looked in her own hands, and shook her handkerchief with the quick, nervous, alarmed movement of one who suddenly discovers a very particular loss,—became, in an instant, pale as death, stared for a moment at Miss Wimple with fixed eyes, and slightly shivered. Then, quickly and fiercely, she snatched the card from Miss Wimple's hand,—

"Where—where did you find this? Did—did I leave—drop—?"

"You left it on my counter," Miss Wimple quietly replied, with a considerate self-possession that admirably counterfeited unconsciousness of Madeline's consternation.

"Come hither, into the shop,—a word with you,"—and Madeline entered quickly, and closed the door behind her. For a moment she leaned with her elbow on the counter, and pressed her eyes with her fingers.

"Are you ill, Miss Splurge?" Miss Wimple gently inquired.

"No. Did you read what is on this card?"

"Yes."

"You—you—you read"——Madeline's hands were clenched, her face red and distorted; she gnashed her teeth, and seemed choking.

"Why, Miss Splurge, what is the matter with you? Yes, I read the name,—Mr. Philip Withers. The card lay on the counter,—I could not know it was yours,—I read the name, and immediately brought it to you. What excites you so? Sit down, and calm yourself; surely you are ill."

Madeline did not accept the stool Miss Wimple offered her, but, availing herself of the pause to assume a forced calmness which left her paler than at first, she fixed her flashing eyes steadily on the deep, still eyes of her companion, and asked,—

"You did not turn this card, then?—you did not look on the other side?"

"On my honor, I did not."

"On your honor! You are not lying, girl?"—Miss Splurge thrust the card into the newly-purchased pocket-book, and hid that in her bosom.

"Miss Splurge," said Miss Wimple, very simply, and with no excitement of tone or expression, "when you feel sufficiently recovered to appear on the street, without exposing yourself there as you have done in here, go out!"

And Miss Wimple turned from Madeline and would have resumed her sewing; but Madeline cried,—

"Stay, stay, Miss Wimple, I beseech you! I knew not what I said; forgive

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

me, ah, forgive me!—for you are merciful, as you are pure and true. If you were aware of all, you would know that I could not insult you, if I would. Trouble, distraction, have made me coarse,—false, too, to myself as unjust and injurious to you; for I know your virtues, and believe in them as I believe in little else in this world or the next. If in my hour of agony and shame I could implore the help of any human being, I would come to you—dear, honest, brave girl!—before all others, to fling myself at your feet, and kiss your hands, and beseech you to pity me and save me from myself, to hold my hot head on your gentle bosom, and your soothing hand on my fierce heart. Good-by! Good-by! I need not ask your pardon again,—you have no anger for such as I. But if your blessed loneliness is ever disturbed by vulgar, chattering visitors, you will not name me to them, or confess that you have seen me." And ere Miss Wimple could utter the gentle words that were already on her lips, Madeline was gone.

For a while Miss Wimple remained standing on the spot, gazing anxiously, but vacantly, toward the door by which the half-mad lady had departed, — her soft, deep eyes full of painful apprehension. Then she resumed her little rocking-chair, and, as she gathered up her work from the floor where she had dropped it, tears trickled down her cheeks; she sighed and shook her head, in utter sorrow.

"They were always strange women," she thought, "those Splurges, — not a sound heart nor a healthy mind among them. Could their false, barren life have maddened this proud Madeline? Else what did she mean by her 'hot head' and her 'fierce heart'? And what had that Philip Withers to do with her trouble and her distraction? She recollected now that Simon had once said, in his odd, significant way, that Mr. Withers was a charming person to contemplate from a safe distance,—Simon, who never lent himself to idle detraction. She remembered, too, that she had often reproached herself for her irrational prejudice against the man,—that she was forever finding something false and sinister in the face that every one else said was eminently handsome, and ugly dissonance in the voice that all Hendrik praised for its music. Was he on both sides of that card?—Ah, well! it might be just nothing, after all; the poor lady might be ill, or vexed past endurance at home; or some unhappy love affair might have come to fret her proud, impatient, defiant temper. But not Withers,—oh, of course not Withers!—for was it not well known that Adelaide was his choice, that his assiduous and graceful attentions to her silenced even his loudest enemies, who could no longer accuse him of duplicity and disloyalty to women? But she would feel less disturbed, and sleep better, perhaps, if she knew that Madeline was safe at home, and tranquil again."

Thinking of sleep reminded Miss Wimple that she had a pious task to perform before she could betake her to her sweet little cot. A superannuated and bedridden woman, who had nursed her mother in her last illness, lived on the northern outskirts of the town; and she must cross the long covered bridge that spanned the Hendrik River to take a basket full of comforting trifles to old Hetty that night.

About nine o'clock Miss Wimple had done her charitable errand, and was on her way home again, with a light step and a happy heart, an empty basket and old Hetty's abundant blessings. She was alone, but feared nothing,—the streets of Hendrik at night were familiar to her and she to them; and although her shy and quiet traits were not sufficiently understood to make her universally beloved, not a loafing ruffian in town but knew her modest face, her odd attire, and her straightforward walk; and the rudest respected her.

As she approached the covered bridge, the moon was shining brightly at the entrance, making the gloom within profounder. It was a long, wooden structure, of a kind common enough on the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

turnpikes of the Atlantic States, where they cross the broader streams. Stout posts and cross-beams, and an arch that stretched from end to end, divided the bridge into two longitudinal compartments, for travellers going and coming respectively; there were small windows on each side, and at either end, on a conspicuous signboard, were the Company's "Rules,"—"Walk your Horses over this Bridge, or be subject to a Fine of not less than Five nor exceeding Twenty Dollars"—"Keep to the Right, as the Law directs."

As Miss Wimple entered the shadow of the bridge on the right hand, she was startled by hearing excited voices, which seemed to come from the other side of the central arch, and about the middle of the bridge, where the darkness was deepest:—

"Speak low, I say, or be silent! Some one will be coming presently;—I heard steps approaching even now"—Miss Wimple instinctively stopped, and stood motionless, almost holding her breath, at the end of the arch where the moonlight did not reach. She was no eavesdropper, mark you,—the meannesses she scorned included that character in a special clause. But she had recognized the voice, and with her own true delicacy would spare the speaker the shame of discovery and the dread of exposure.—"Speak low, or I will leave you. If you are indifferent for yourself, you shall not toss me to the geese of Hendrik."

"You are right";—it was a woman's voice; but, whatever her tone had been before, she spoke so low now, and with a voice so hoarse with suppressed emotion, so altered by a sort of choking whisper, that Miss Wimple, if she had ever heard it before, could not recognize it;—"You are right; the time for that has not come;—I could not stay to enjoy it;—I am going now, but we will meet again."

"What would you have? I have said I would marry you,—and leave you,—so soon as I can shake myself clear of that other stupid infatuation."

"Now, Philip Withers, what a weak, pusillanimous wretch you must be, having known me so long, and tried my temper so well, to hope to find me such a fool, after all,—that kind of fool, I mean! My deepest shame, in this unutterably shameful hour, is that I chose such a cowardly ass to besot myself with.—There, the subject sickens me, and I am going. Dare to follow me, and the geese of Hendrik shall have you. I go scot-free, fearing nothing, having nothing to lose; but I hold you, my exquisite Joseph Surface—oh, the wit of my sister! oh, the wisdom of fools!—by your fine sentiments; and when I want you I shall find you. I can take care of me and *mine;* but beware how you dare to claim lot or portion in what I choose to call my own, even though your brand be on it,—Joseph!"

She hissed the name, and, with hurried steps, and a low, scornful laugh, departed. As Miss Wimple, all aghast, leaned forward with quick breath and tumultuous heart, and peered through the gloom toward where the silver moonlight lay across the further end of the bridge, she saw a white dress flash across a bright space and disappear. Then Philip Withers stepped forth into the moonlight, stood there for a minute or two, and gazed in the direction of a branch road which made off from the turnpike close to the bridge, and led, at right angles to it, to the railroad station on the right; then slowly, and without once looking back, he followed the turnpike to the town.

All astonished, bewildered, full of strange, vague fears, Miss Wimple remained in the now awful gloom and stillness of the bridge till he had quite disappeared. Then gathering up her wits with an effort, she resumed her homeward way. As she emerged from the shadows into the same bright place which Withers and his mysterious companion had just passed, she spied something dark lying on the ground. She stooped and picked it up; it was a small morocco pocket-book lined with pink silk.

Good Heaven! She remembered,—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the one she had sold to Miss Madeline Splurge that afternoon,—the very same! So, then, that was her voice, her dress; she had, indeed, dimly thought of Madeline more than once, while that woman was speaking so bitterly,—but had not recognized her tones, nor once fancied it might be she. Now she easily recalled her words, and understood some of her allusions. And her wild, distracted, incoherent speech in the shop, too,—ah! it was all too plain; that was surely she; but what might be the nature or degree of her trouble Miss Wimple dared not try to guess. This Philip Withers,—was he a villain, after all? "Had he—this poor lady—Oh, God forbid! No, no, no!"

She opened the pocket-book;—a visiting-card was all it contained. She drew it forth,—"Mr. Philip Withers,"—yes, she knew it by that broken corner, as though it had been marked so for a purpose. She held it up before her eyes where the moon was brightest, and—turned the other side.

"Ah, me!" exclaimed that Chevalier Bayard in shabby, skimped delaine, "what was I going to do?"

Blushing, she returned the card to its place, and hiding the pocket-book in her honorable bosom, hurried homeward. But her soul was troubled as she went; sometimes she sobbed aloud, and more than once she stood still and wrung her hands.

"Ah! if Simon Blount would but come now to advise me what is safest and best to do!"

Should she go to Mrs. Splurge and tell her all? No,—what right had she? That would but precipitate an exposure which might not be necessary. The case was not clear enough to justify so officious a step. Madeline was in no immediate danger. Perhaps she had only taken a different road to avoid the odious companionship of Withers. No doubt she was half-way home already. She would wait till morning, for clearer judgment and information. Till then she would hope for the best.

When Miss Wimple reached her humble little nest, she knelt beside her bed and prayed, tearfully, to the God who averts danger and forgives sin; but she did not sleep all night.

In the morning a gossiping neighbor came with the news;—"that little cooped-up Wimple never hears anything," she thought.

Miss Madeline Splurge had disappeared. Mr. Philip Withers was searching for her high and low. She had not been seen since yesterday afternoon,—had not returned home last night. It was feared she had drowned herself in the river for spite. She, the knowing neighbor, "had always said so,—had always said that Madeline Splurge was a quare girl,—sich high and mighty airs, and *sich* a temper. Now here it was, and what would people say,—specially them as had always turned up their nose at her opinion?"

Miss Wimple said nothing; but she treated Pity to two poor little lies;—one she told, and the other she looked:—She was not well, she said, which was the reason why she was so pale; and then she looked surprised at the news of Madeline's flitting.

Later in the day another report:—A letter left by Madeline had been found at home. She had taken offence at some sharp thing that sarcastic Mr. Withers, who always did hate her, had said; and had gone off in a miff, without even good-by or a carpet-bag, and taken the night train to New York, where she had an uncle on the mother's side.—And a good riddance! Now Miss Addy and Mr. Withers would have some peace of their time. Such a sweet couple, too!

Madeline *had* left a note:—"I was sick of you all, and I have escaped from you. You will be foolish to take any trouble about it."

[To be continued.]

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE CUP.

THE cup I sing is a cup of gold,
Many and many a century old,
Sculptured fair, and over-filled
With wine of a generous vintage, spilled
In crystal currents and foaming tides
All round its luminous, pictured sides.

Old Time enamelled and embossed
This ancient cup at an infinite cost.
Its frame he wrought of metal that run
Red from the furnace of the sun.
Ages on ages slowly rolled
Before the glowing mass was cold,
And still he toiled at the antique mould,—
Turning it fast in his fashioning hand,
Tracing circle, layer, and band,
Carving figures quaint and strange,
Pursuing, through many a wondrous change,
The symmetry of a plan divine.
At last he poured the lustrous wine,
Crowned high the radiant wave with light,
And held aloft the goblet bright,
Half in shadow, and wreathed in mist
Of purple, amber, and amethyst.

This is the goblet from whose brink
All creatures that have life must drink:
Foemen and lovers, haughty lord
And sallow beggar with lips abhorred.
The new-born infant, ere it gain
The mother's breast, this wine must drain.
The oak with its subtile juice is fed,
The rose drinks till her cheeks are red,
And the dimpled, dainty violet sips
The limpid stream with loving lips.
It holds the blood of sun and star,
And all pure essences that are:
No fruit so high on the heavenly vine,
Whose golden hanging clusters shine
On the far-off shadowy midnight hills,
But some sweet influence it distils
That slideth down the silvery rills.
Here Wisdom drowned her dangerous thought,
The early gods their secrets brought;
Beauty, in quivering lines of light,
Ripples before the ravished sight;
And the unseen mystic spheres combine
To charm the cup and drug the wine.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

All day I drink of the wine and deep
In its stainless waves my senses steep;
All night my peaceful soul lies drowned
In hollows of the cup profound;
Again each morn I clamber up
The emerald crater of the cup,
On massive knobs of jasper stand
And view the azure ring expand:
I watch the foam-wreaths toss and swim
In the wine that o'erruns the jewelled rim,
Edges of chrysolite emerge,
Dawn-tinted, from the misty surge;
My thrilled, uncovered front I lave,
My eager senses kiss the wave,
And drain, with its viewless draught, the lore
That warmeth the bosom's secret core,
And the fire that maddens the poet's brain
With wild sweet ardor and heavenly pain.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE SEA.

EVERY calling has something of a special dialect. Even where there is, one would think, no necessity for it, as in the conversation of Sophomores, sporting men, and reporters for the press, a dialect is forthwith partly invented, partly suffered to grow, and the sturdy stem of original English exhibits a new crop of parasitic weeds which often partake of the nature of fungi and betoken the decay of the trunk whence they spring.

Is this the case with the language of the sea? Has the sea any language? or has each national tongue grafted into it the technology of the maritime calling?

The sea has its own laws,—the common and unwritten law of the forecastle, of which Admiralty Courts take infrequent cognizance, and the law of the quarter-deck, which is to be read in acts of Parliament and statutes of Congress. The sea has its own customs, superstitions, traditions, architecture, and government; wherefore not its own language? We maintain that it has, and that this tongue, which is not enumerated by Adelung, which possesses no grammar and barely a lexicon of its own, and which is not numbered among the polyglot achievements of Mezzofanti or Burritt, has yet a right to its place among the world's languages.

Like everything else which is used at sea,—except salt-water,—its materials came from shore. As the ship is originally wrought from the live-oak forests of Florida and the pine mountains of Norway, the iron mines of England, the hemp and flax fields of Russia, so the language current upon her deck is the composite gift of all sea-loving peoples. But as all these physical elements of construction suffer a sea-change on passing into the service of Poseidon, so again the landward phrases are metamorphosed by their contact with the main. But no one set of them is allowed exclusive predominance. For the ocean is the only true, grand, federative commonwealth which has never owned a single master. The cloud-compelling Zeus might do as he pleased on land; but far

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

beyond the range of outlook from the white watch-tower of Olympus rolled the immeasurable waves of the wine-purple deep, acknowledging only the Enosigaios Poseidon. Consequently, while Zeus allotted to this and that hero and demigod Argos and Mycene and the woody Zacynthus, each to each, the ocean remained unbounded and unmeted. Nation after nation, race after race, has tried its temporary lordship, but only at the pleasure of the sea itself. Sometimes the ensign of sovereignty has been an eagle, sometimes a winged lion,—now a black raven, then a broom, — to-day St. Andrew's Cross, to-morrow St. George's, perhaps the next a starry cluster. There is no permanent architecture of the main by which to certify the triumphs of these past invaders. Their ruined castles are lying "fifty fathom deep,"—Carthaginian galley and Roman trireme, the argosy of Spain, the "White Ship" of Fitz Stephen, the "Ville de Paris," down to the latest "non-arrival" whispered at Lloyd's,—all are gone out of sight into the forgotten silences of the green underworld. Upon the land we can trace Roman and Celt, Saxon and Norman, by names and places, by minster, keep, and palace. This one gave the battlement, that the pinnacle, the other the arch. But the fluent surface of the sea takes no such permanent impression. Gone are the quaint stern-galleries, gone the high top-gallant forecastles, gone the mighty banks of oars of the olden time. It is only in the language that we are able to trace the successive nations in their march along the mountain waves; for to that each has from time to time given its contribution, and of each it has worn the seeming stamp, till some Actium or Lepanto or Cape Trafalgar has compelled its reluctant transfer to another's hands.

Or rather, we may say, the language of the sea comes and makes a part, as it were, of the speech of many different nations, as the sailor abides for a season in Naples, Smyrna, Valparaiso, Canton, and New York,—and from each it borrows, as the sailor does, from this a silk handkerchief, from that a cap, here a brooch, and there a scrap of tattooing, but still remains inhabitant of all and citizen of none,—the language of the seas.

What do we mean by this? It is that curious nomenclature which from truck to keelson clothes the ship with strange but fitting phrases,—which has its proverbs, idioms, and forms of expression that are of the sea, salt, and never of the land, earthy. Wherever tidewater flows, goes also some portion of this speech. It is "understanded of the people" among all truly nautical races. It dominates over their own languages, so that the Fin and Mowree, (Maori,) the Lascar and the Armorican, meeting on the same deck, find a common tongue whereby to carry on the ship's work,—the language in which to "hand, reef, and steer."

Whence did it come? From all nautical peoples. Not from the Hebrew race. To them the possession of the soil was a fixed idea. The sea itself had nothing wherewith to tempt them; they were not adventurers or colonizers; they had none of that accommodating temper as to creed, customs, and diet, which is the necessary characteristic of the sailor. But the nations they expelled from Canaan, the worshippers of the fish-tailed Dagon, who fled westward to build Tartessus (Tarshish) on the Gaditanian peninsula, or who clung with precarious footing to the sea-shore of Philistia and the rocky steeps of Tyre and Sidon,—these were seafarers. From them their Greek offshoots, the Ionian islanders, inherited something of the maritime faculty. There are traces in the "Odyssey" of a nautical language, of a technology exclusively belonging to the world "off soundings," and an exceeding delight in the rush and spray-flinging of a vessel's motion,—

> "The purple wave hissed from the bow of the bark in its going."

Hence the Greek is somewhat of a sailor to this day, and in many a Mediterranean port lie sharp and smartly-rigged brigantines with classic names of old Heathendom gilt in pure Greek type upon their sterns.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But the Greek and Carthaginian elements of the ocean language must now lie buried very deep in it, and it is hard to recognize their original image and superscription in those smooth-worn current coins which form the basis of the sea-speech. It is not within the limits of a cursory paper like this to enter into too deep an investigation, or to trace perhaps a fanciful lineage for such principal words as "mast," and "sail," and "rope." In one word, "anchor," the Greek plainly survives, — and doubtless many others might be made out by a skilful philologist.

The Roman, to whom the empire of the sea, or, more properly speaking, the petty principality of the Mediterranean, was transferred, had little liking for that sceptre. He was driven to the water by sheer necessity, but he never took to it kindly. He was at best a sea-soldier, a marine, not brought up from the start in the merchant-service and then polished into the complete blue-jacket and able seaman of the navy. Nobody can think of those ponderous old Romans, whose comedies were all borrowed from Attica, whose poems were feeble echoes of the Greek, and whose architecture, art, and domestic culture were at best the work of foreign artists,—nobody can think of them at sea without a quiet chuckle at the inevitable consequences of the first "reef-topsail breeze." Fancy those solemn, stately Patricians, whose very puns are ponderous enough to set their galleys a streak deeper in the water, fancy them in a brisk sea with a nor'wester brewing to windward, watching off the port of Carthage for Admiral Hasdrubal and his fleet to come out. They were good hand-to-hand fighters, — none better; and so they won their victories, no doubt; but, having won them, they dropped sea-going, and made the conquered nations transport their corn and troops, while they went back to their congenial camps and solemn Senate-debates.

But Italy was not settled by the Roman alone. A black-haired, fire-eyed, daring, flexible race had colonized the Sicilian Islands, and settled thickly around the Tarentine Gulf, and built their cities up the fringes of the Apennines as far as the lovely Bay of Parthenope. Greek they were,—by tradition the descendants of those who took Troy-town, — Greek they are to this day, as any one may see who will linger on the Mole or by the Santa Lucia Stairs at Naples. At Salerno, at Amalfi, were cradled those fishing-hamlets which were to nurse seamen, and not soldiers. Far up the Adriatic, the storm of Northern invasion had forced a fair-haired and violet-eyed folk into the fastnesses of the lagoons, to drive their piles and lay their keels upon the reedy islets of San Giorgio and San Marco; while on the western side an ancient Celtic colony was rising into prominence, and rearing at the foot of the Ligurian Alps the palaces of Genoa the Proud.

Thus upon the Italian stock was begun the language of the seas. Upon the Italian main the words "tack" and "sheet," "prow" and "poop," were first heard; and those most important terms by which the law of the marine highway is given,—"starboard" and "larboard." For if, after the Italian popular method, we contract the words *questo bordo* (this side) and *quello bordo* (that side) into *sto bordo* and *lo bordo*, we have the roots of our modern phrases. And so the term "port," which in naval usage supersedes "larboard," is the abbreviated *porta lo timone*, (carry the helm,) which, like the same term in military usage, "port arms," seems traditionally to suggest the left hand.

But while the Italian races were beginning their brief but brilliant career, there was in training a nobler and hardier race of seamen, from whose hands the helm would not so soon be wrested. The pirates of the Baltic were wrestling with the storms of the wild Cattegat and braving the sleety squalls of the Skager Rack, stretching far out from the land to colonize Iceland and the Faroes, to plant a mysteriously lost nation in Eastern Greenland, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to leave strange traces of themselves by the vine-clad shores of Narragansett Bay. For, first of all nations and races to steer boldly into the deep, to abandon the timid fashion of the Past, which groped from headland to headland, as boys paddle skiffs from wharf to wharf,—the Viking met the blast and the wave, and was no more the slave, but the lord of the sea. He it was, who, abandoning the traditionary rule which loosened canvas only to a wind dead aft or well on the quarter, learned to brace up sharp on a wind and to baffle the adverse airs. Yet he, too, was overmuch a fighter to make a true seaman, and his children no sooner set foot on the shore than they drew their swords and went to carving the conquered land into Norman lordships. But where they piloted the way others followed, and city after city along the German Ocean and upon the British coasts became also maritime. For King Alfred had come, and the English oaks were felled, and their gnarled boughs found exceedingly convenient for the curved knees of ships. Upon the Italian stock became engrafted the Norman, and French, and Danish, the North German and Saxon elements. And so, after a century of crusading had thoroughly broken up the stay-at-home notions of Europe, the maritime spirit blazed up. Spain and Portugal now took the lead and were running races against each other, the one in the Western, the other in the Eastern seas, and flaunting their crowned flags in monopoly of the Indian archipelagos and the American tropics. Just across the North Sea, over the low sand-dykes of Holland, scarce higher than a ship's bulwarks, looked a race whom the spleeny wits of other nations declared to be born web-footed. Yet their sails were found in every sea, and, like resolute merchants, as they were, they left to others the glory while they did the world's carrying. Their impress upon the sea-language was neither faint nor slight. They were true marines, and from Manhattan Island to utmost Japan, the brown, bright sides, full bows, and bulwarks tumbling home of the Dutchman were familiar as the sea-gulls. Underneath their clumsy-looking upperworks, the lines were true and sharp; and but the other day, when the world's clippers were stooping their lithe race-horse-like forms to the seas in the great ocean sweepstakes, the fleetest of all was —a Dutchman.

But to combine and fuse all these elements was the work of England. To that nation, with its noble inheritance of a composite language, incomparably rich in all the nomenclature of natural objects and sounds, was given especially the coast department, so to speak, of language. Every variety of shore, from shingly beaches to craggy headlands, was theirs. While the grand outlines and larger features are Italian, such as Cape, Island, Gulf, the minuter belong to the Northern races, who are closer observers of Nature's nice differences, and who take more delight in a frank, fearless acquaintance and fellowship with out-door objects. Beach, sand, headland, foreland, shelf, reef, breaker, bar, bank, ledge, shoal, spit, sound, race, reach, are words of Northern origin. So, too, the host of local names by which every peculiar feature of shore-scenery is individualized, — as, for instance, the Needles, the Eddystone, the Three Chimneys, the Hen and Chickens, the Bishop and Clerks. The strange atmospheric phenomena, especially of the tropics, have been christened by the Spaniard and Portuguese, the Corposant, the Pampero, the Tornado, the Hurricane. Then follows a host of words of which the derivation is doubtful,—such as sea, mist, foam, scud, rack. Their monosyllabic character may only be the result of that clipping and trimming which words get on shipboard Your seaman's tongue is a true bed of Procrustes for the unhappy words that roll over it. They are docked without mercy, or, now and then, when not properly mouth-filling, they are "spliced" with a couple of vowels. It is impossible to tell the whys and wherefores of sea-prejudices.

We have now indicated the main

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sources of the ocean-language. As new nations are received into the nautical brotherhood, and as new improvements are made, new terms come in. The whole whaling diction is the contribution of America, or rather of Nantucket, New Bedford, and New London, aided by the islands of the Pacific and the mongrel Spanish ports of the South Seas. Here and there an adventurous genius coins a phrase for the benefit of posterity,—as we once heard a mate order a couple of men to "go forrard and trim the ship's whiskers," to the utter bewilderment of his captain, who, in thirty years' following of the sea, had never heard the martingale chains and stays so designated. But the source of the great body of the sea-language might be marked out on the map by a current flowing out of the Straits of Gibraltar and meeting a similar tide from the Baltic, the two encountering and blending in the North Sea and circling Great Britain, while not forgetting to wash the dykes of Holland as they go. How to distinguish the work of each, in founding the common tongue, is not here our province.

It would be difficult to classify the words in nautical use,—impossible here to do more than hint at such a possibility. A specimen or two will show the situation of the present tongue, and the blending process already gone through with. We need not dip for this so far into the tar-bucket as to bother (*nauticè*, "galley") the landsman. We will take terms familiar to all. The three masts of a ship are known as "fore," "main," and "mizzen." Of these, the first is English, the second Norman-French, the third Italian (*mezzano*). To go from masts to sails, we have "duck" from the Swedish *duk*, and "canvas" from the Mediterranean languages,—from the root *canna*, a cane or reed,—thence a cloth of reeds or rushes, a mat-sail,—hence any sail. Of the ends of a ship, "stern" is from the Saxon *stearn*, steering-place; "stem," from the German *stamm*. The whole family of ropes—of which, by the way, it is a common saying, that there are but three to a ship, namely, *bolt*-rope, *bucket*-rope, and *man*-rope, all the rest of the cordage being called by its special name, as *tack*, *sheet*, *clew-line*, *bow-line*, *brace*, *shroud*, or *stay*—the whole family of ropes are akin only by marriage. "Cable" is from the Semitic root *kebel*, to cord, and is the same in all nautical uses. "Hawser"—once written *halser*—is from the Baltic stock,—the rope used for halsing or hauling along; while "painter," the small rope by which a boat is temporarily fastened, is Irish,—from *painter*, a snare. "Sheet" is Italian,—from *scotta*; "brace" French, and "stay" English. "Clew" is Saxon; "garnet" (from *granato*, a fruit) is Italian,—that is, the garnet- or pomegranate-shaped block fastened to the clew or corner of the courses, and hence the rope running through the block. Then we find in the materials used in stopping leaks the same diversity. "Pitch" one easily gets from *pix* (Latin); "tar" as easily from the Saxon *tare*, *tyr*. "Junk," old rope, is from the Latin *juncus*, a bulrush,—the material used along the Mediterranean shore for calking; "oakum," from the Saxon *œcumbe*, or hemp. The verb "calk" may come from the Danish *kalk*, chalk,—to rub over,—or from the Italian *calafatare*. The now disused verb "to pay" is from the Italian *pagare*;—it survives only in the nautical aphorism, "Here's the Devil to *pay*,"—that is, to pitch the ship,—"and no pitch hot." In handing the sails, "to loose" is good English,—"to furl" is Armorican, and belongs to the Mediterranean class of words. "To rake," which is applied to spars, is from the Saxon *racian*, to incline;—"to steeve," which is applied to the bowsprit, and often pronounced "stave," is from the Italian *stivare*. When we get below-decks, we find "cargo" to be Spanish,—while "ballast" (from *bat*, a boat, and *last*, a load) is Saxon. A ship in ballast comes from the Baltic,—a vessel and cargo from the Bay of Biscay. Sailors must eat; but there is a significant distinction between merchant-seamen and man-o'-war's-men. The former

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is provided for at the "caboose," or "camboose," (Dutch, *kombuis*); the latter goes to the "galley," (Italian, *galera*, in helmet, primitively). This distinction is fast dying out,—the naval term superseding the mercantile,—just as in America the title "captain" has usurped the place of the more precise and orthodox term, "master," which is now used only in law-papers. The "bowsprit" is a compound of English and Dutch. The word "yard" is English; the word "boom," Dutch. The word "reef" is Welsh, from *rhevu*, to thicken or fold; "tack" and "sheet" are both Italian; "deck" is German. Other words are the result of contractions. Few would trace in "dipsey," a sounding-lead, the words "deep sea"; or in "futtocks" the combination "foot-hooks,"—the name of the connecting-pieces of the floor-timbers of a ship. "Breast-hook" has escaped contraction. Sailors have, indeed, a passion for metamorphosing words, — especially proper names. Those lie a little out of our track; but two instances are too good to be omitted:—The "Bellerophon," of the British navy, was always known as the "Bully-ruffian," and the "Ville de Milan," a French prize, as the "Wheel-'em-along." Here you have a random bestowal of names which seems to defy all analysis of the rule of their bestowal.

If the reader inclines to follow up the scent here indicated, we can add a hint or two which may be of service. We have shown the sources, which should, for purposes of classification, be designated, not as English, Italian, Danish, etc., but nautically, as Mediterranean, Baltic, or Atlantic. These three heads will serve for general classification, to which must be added a fourth or "off-soundings" department, into which should go all words suggested by whim or accidental resemblances, — such terms as "monkey-rail," "Turk's head," "dead-eye," etc.,—or which get the name of an inventor, as a "Matthew-Walker knot." More than that cannot well be given without going into the whole detail of naval history, tactics, and science, — a thing, of course, impossible here.

This brings us to another view of the subject, which may serve for conclusion. A great many people take upon themselves to act for and about the sailor, to preach to him, make laws for him, act as his counsel, write tracts for him, and generally to look after his moral and physical well-being. Now eleven out of every dozen of these are continually making themselves ridiculous by an utter ignorance of all nautical matters. They pick up a few worn-out phrases of sea-life, which have long since left the forecastle, and which have been bandied about from one set of landsmen to another, have been dropped by sham-sailors begging on fictitious wooden-legs, then by small sea-novelists, handed to smaller dramatists for the Wapping class of theatres, to be by them abandoned to the smallest writers of pirate and privateer tales for the Sunday press. And stringing these together, with a hazy apprehension of their meaning, they think they are "talking sailor" in great perfection. Now the sailor will talk with pleasure to any straightforward and perfectly "green" landsman, and the two will converse in an entirely intelligible manner. But confusion worse confounded is the result of this ambitious ignorance,—confusion of brain to the sailor, and confusion of face to the landsman.

For the sea has a language, beyond a peradventure,—an exceedingly arbitrary, technical, and perplexing one, unless it be studied with the illustrated grammar of the full-rigged ship before one, with the added commentaries of the sea and the sky and the coast chart. To learn to speak it requires about as long as to learn to converse passably in French, Italian, or Spanish; and unless it be spoken well, it is exceedingly absurd to any appreciative listener.

If you desire to study it philologically, after the living manner of Dean Trench, it will well repay you. If you desire to use it as a familiar vehicle of discourse,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wherewith to impress the understanding and heart of the sailor, you undertake a very difficult thing. For though men are moved best by apt illustrations from the things familiar to them, *un*apt illustrations most surely disgust them.

But if you earnestly desire it, we know of but one certain course, which is best explained in a brief anecdote. An English gentleman, who was in all the agonies of a rough and tedious passage from Folkestone to Boulogne, was especially irritated by the aggravating nonchalance of a fellow-passenger, who perpetrated all manner of bilious feats, in eating, drinking, and smoking, unharmed. English reserve and the agony of sea-sickness long contended in Sir John's breast. At last the latter conquered, and, leaning from the window of his travelling-carriage, which was securely lashed to the forward deck of the steamer, he exclaimed,—"I say, d'ye know, I'd give a guinea to know your secret for keeping well in this infernal Channel." The traveller solemnly extended one hand for the money, and, as it dropped into his palm, with the other shaded his mouth, that no portion of the oracle might fall on unpaid-for ears, and whispered,—"Hark'ye, brother, GO TO SEA TWENTY YEARS, AS I HAVE."

THE WHIRLIGIG OF TIME.

"And thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges."—TWELFTH NIGHT.

MY friend Jameson, the lawyer, has frequently whiled away an evening in relating incidents which occurred in his practice during his residence in a Western State. On one occasion he gave a sketch of a criminal trial in which he was employed as counsel; the story, as developed in court and completed by one of the parties subsequently, made so indelible an impression on my mind that I am constrained to write down its leading features. At the same time, I must say, that, if I had heard it without a voucher for its authenticity, I should have regarded it as the most improbable of fictions. But the observing reader will remember that remarkable coincidences, and the signal triumph of the right, called poetical justice, are sometimes seen in actual life as well as in novels.

The tale must begin in Saxony. Carl Proch was an honest farmer, who tilled a small tract of crown land and thereby supported his aged mother. Faithful to his duties, he had never a thought of discontent, but was willing to plod on in the way his father had gone before him. Filial affection, however, did not so far engross him as to prevent his casting admiring glances on the lovely Katrine, daughter of old Rauchen, the miller; and no wonder, for she was as fascinating a damsel as ever dazzled and perplexed a bashful lover. She had admiration enough, for to see her was to love her; many of the village youngsters had looked unutterable things as they met her at May-feasts and holidays, but up to this time she had received no poetical epistles nor direct proposals, and was as cheerful and heart-free as the birds that sang around her windows. Her father was the traditional guardian of beauty, surly as the mastiff that watched his sacks of flour and his hoard of thalers; and though he doted on his darling Katrine, his heart to all the world beside seemed to be only a chip from one of his old mill-stones. When Carl thought of the severe gray eyes that shot such glances at all lingering youths, the difficulty of winning the pretty heiress seemed to be

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quite enough, even with a field clear of rivals. But two other suitors now made advances, more or less openly, and poor Carl thought himself entirely overshadowed. One was Schönfeld, the most considerable farmer in the neighborhood, a widower, with hair beginning to show threads of silver, and a fierce man withal, who was supposed to have once slain a rival, wearing thereafter a seam in his cheek as a souvenir of the encounter. The other was Hans Stolzen, a carpenter, past thirty, a shrewd, well-to-do fellow, with nearly a thousand thalers saved from his earnings. Carl had never fought a duel,—and he had not saved so much as a thousand groschen, to say nothing of thalers; he had only a manly figure, a cheery, open face, the freshness of one-and-twenty, and a heart incapable of guile. Katrine was not long in discovering these excellences, and, if his boldness had equalled his passion, she would have shown him how little she esteemed the pretensions of the proud landholder or the miserly carpenter. But he took it for granted that he was a fool to contend against such odds, and, buttoning his jacket tightly over his throbbing heart, toiled away in his little fields, thinking that the whole world had never contained so miserable a man.

Hans Stolzen was the first to propose. He began by paying court to the jealous Rauchen himself, set forth his property and prospects, and asked to become his son-in-law. The miller heard him, puffed long whiffs, and answered civilly, but without committing himself. He was in no hurry to part with the only joy he had, and, as Katrine was barely eighteen, he naturally thought there would be time enough to consider of her marriage hereafter. Hans hardly expected anything more decisive, and, as he had not been flatly refused, came frequently to the house and chatted with her father, while his eyes followed the vivacious Katrine as she tripped about her household duties. But Hans was perpetually kept at a distance; the humming-bird would never alight upon the outstretched hand. He had not the wit to see that their natures had nothing in common, although he did know that Katrine was utterly indifferent towards him, and after some months of hopeless pursuit he began to grow sullenly angry. He was not long without an object on which to vent his rage.

One evening, as Katrine was returning homeward, she chanced to pass Carl's cottage. Carl was loitering under a tree hard by, listening to the quick footsteps to which his heart kept time. It was the coming of Fate to him, for he had made up his mind to tell her of the love that was consuming him. Two days before, with tears on his bashful face, he had confided all to his mother; and, at her suggestion, he had now provided a little present by way of introduction. Katrine smiled sweetly as she approached, for, with a woman's quick eye, she had read his glances long before. His lips at first rebelled, but he struggled out a salutation, and, the ice once broken, he found himself strangely unembarrassed. He breathed freely. It seemed to him that their relations must have been fixed in some previous state of existence, so natural was it to be in familiar and almost affectionate communication with the woman whom before he had loved afar off, as a page might sigh for a queen.

"Stay, Katrine," he said, — "I had nearly forgotten." He ran hastily into the cottage, and soon returned with a covered basket. "See, Katrine, these white rabbits!—are they not pretty?"

"Oh, the little pets!" exclaimed Katrine. "Are they yours?"

"No, Katrinchen,—that is, they were mine; now they are yours."

"Thank you, Carl. I shall love them dearly."

"For my sake?"

"For their own, Carl, certainly; for yours also,—a little."

"Good-bye, Bunny," said he, patting the head of one of the rabbits. "Love your mistress; and, mind, little whitey, don't keep those long ears of yours for

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nothing; tell me if you ever hear anything about me."

"Perhaps Carl had better come and hear for himself,—don't you think so, Bunny?" said Katrine, taking the basket.

The tone and manner said more than the words. Carl's pulses bounded; he seized her unresisting hand and covered it with kisses. "So! this is the bashful young man!" thought Katrine. "I shall not need to encourage him any more, surely."

The night was coming on; Katrine remembered her father, and started towards the mill, whose broad arms could scarcely be seen through the twilight. Carl accompanied her to the gate, and, after a furtive glance upward to the house-windows, bade her farewell, with a kiss, and turned homeward, feeling himself a man for the first time in his life.

Frau Proch had seen the pantomime through the flowers that stood on the window-sill, not ill-pleased, and was waiting her son's return. An hour passed, and he did not come. Another hour, and she began to grow anxious. When it was near midnight, she roused her nearest neighbor and asked him to go towards the mill and look for Carl. An hour of terrible suspense ensued. It was worse than she had even feared. Carl lay by the roadside, not far from the mill, insensible, covered with blood, moaning feebly at first, and afterwards silent, if not breathless. Ghastly wounds covered his head, and his arms and shoulders were livid with bruises. The neighboring peasants surrounded the apparently lifeless body, and listened with awe to the frenzied imprecations of Frau Proch upon the murderer of her son. "May he die in a foreign land," said she, lifting her withered hands to Heaven, "without wife to nurse him or priest to speak peace to his soul! May his body lie unburied, a prey for wolves and vultures! May his inheritance pass into the hands of strangers, and his name perish from the earth!" They muttered their prayers, as they encountered her bloodshot, but tearless eyes, and left her with her son.

For a whole day and night he did not speak; then a violent brain-fever set in, and he raved continually. He fancied himself pursued by Hans Stolzen, and recoiled as from the blows of his staff. When this was reported, suspicion was directed at once to Stolzen as the criminal; but before an arrest could be made, it was found that he had fled. His disappearance confirmed the belief of his guilt. In truth, it was the rejected suitor, who, in a fit of jealous rage, had waylaid his rival in the dark, beat him, and left him for dead.

Katrine, who had always disliked Stolzen, especially after he had pursued her with his coarse and awkward gallantry, now naturally felt a warmer affection for the victim of his brutality. She threw off all disguise, and went frequently to Frau Proch's cottage, to aid in nursing the invalid during his slow and painful recovery. She had, one day, the unspeakable pleasure of catching the first gleam of returning sanity in her hapless lover, as she bent over him and with gentle fingers smoothed his knotted forehead and temples. An indissoluble tie now bound them together; their mutual love was consecrated by suffering and sacrifice; and they vowed to be faithful in life and in death.

When Carl at length became strong and commenced labor, he hoped speedily to claim his betrothed, and was waiting a favorable opportunity to obtain her father's consent to their marriage. The scars were the only evidence of the suffering he had endured. No bones had been broken, and he was as erect and as vigorous as before the assault. But Carl, most unfortunate of men, was not destined so soon to enjoy the happiness for which he hoped,—the love that had called him back to life. As the robber eagle sits on his cliff, waiting till the hawk has seized the ring-dove, then darts down and beats off the captor, that he may secure for himself the prize,—so Schönfeld, not uninformed of what was going on, stood ready to pounce upon the suitor who should gain Katrine's favor, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sweep the last rival out of the way. An officer in the king's service appeared in the village to draw the conscripts for the army, and the young men trembled like penned-up sheep at the entrance of the blood-stained butcher, not knowing who would be seized for the shambles. The officer had apparently been a friend and companion of Schönfeld's in former days, and passed some time at his house. It was perhaps only a coincidence, but it struck the neighbors as very odd at least, that Carl Proch was the first man drawn for the army. He had no money to hire a substitute, and there was no alternative; he must serve his three years. This last blow was too much for his poor mother. Worn down by her constant assiduity in nursing him, and overcome by the sense of utter desolation, she sunk into her grave, and was buried on the very day that Carl, with the other recruits, was marched off.

What new torture the betrothed Katrine felt is not to be told. Three years were to her an eternity; and her imagination called up such visions of danger from wounds, privations, and disease, that she parted from her lover as though it were forever. The miller found that the light and the melody of his house were gone. Katrine was silent and sorrowful; her frame wasted and her step grew feeble. To all his offers of condolence she made no reply, except to remind him how with tears she had besought his interference in Carl's behalf. She would not be comforted. The father little knew the feeling she possessed; he had thought that her attachment to her rustic lover was only a girlish fancy, and that she would speedily forget him; but now her despairing look frightened him. To the neighbors, who looked inquisitively as he sat by the mill-door, smoking, he complained of the quality of his tobacco, vowing that it made his eyes so tender that they watered upon the slightest whiff.

For six months Schönfeld wisely kept away; that period, he thought, would be long enough to efface any recollection of the absent soldier. Then he presented himself, and, in his usual imperious way, offered his hand to Katrine. The miller was inclined to favor his suit. In wealth and position Schönfeld was first in the village; he would be a powerful ally, and a very disagreeable enemy. In fact, Rauchen really feared to refuse the demand; and he plied his daughter with such argument as he could command, hoping to move her to accept the offer. Katrine, however, was convinced of the truth of her former suspicion, that Carl was a victim of Schönfeld's craft; and her rejection of his proposal was pointed with an indignation which she took no pains to conceal. The old scar showed strangely white in his purple face, as he left the mill, vowing vengeance for the affront.

Rauchen and his daughter were now more solitary than ever. The father had forgotten the roaring stories he used to tell to the neighboring peasants, over foaming flagons of ale, at the little inn; he sat at his mill-door and smoked incessantly. Katrine shunned the festivities in which she was once queen, and her manner, though kindly, was silent and reserved; she went to church, it is true, but she wore a look of settled sorrow that awed curiosity and even repelled sympathy. But scandal is a plant that needs no root in the earth; like the houseleek, it can thrive upon air; and those who separate themselves the most entirely from the world are apt, for that very reason, to receive the larger share of its attention. The village girls looked first with pity, then with wonder, and at length with aversion, upon the gentle and unfortunate Katrine. Careless as she was with regard to public opinion, she saw not without pain the altered looks of her old associates, and before long she came to know the cause. A cruel suspicion had been whispered about, touching her in a most tender point. It was not without reason, so the gossip ran, that she had refused so eligible an offer of marriage as Schönfeld's. The story reached the ears of Rauchen, at last. With a fierce

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

energy, such as he had never exhibited before, he tracked it from cottage to cottage, until he came to Schönfeld's housekeeper, who refused to give her authority. The next market-day Rauchen encountered the former suitor and publicly charged him with the slander, in such terms as his baseness deserved. Schönfeld, thrown off his guard by the sudden attack, struck his adversary a heavy blow; but the miller rushed upon him, and left him to be carried home, a bundle of aches and bruises. After this the tongues of the gossips were quiet; no one was willing to answer for guesses or rumors at the end of Rauchen's staff; and the father and daughter resumed their monotonous mode of life.

The three years at length passed, and Carl Proch returned home,—a trifle more sedate, perhaps, but the same noble, manly fellow. How warmly he was received by the constant Katrine it is not necessary to relate. Rauchen was not disposed to thwart his long-suffering daughter any further; and with his consent the young couple were speedily married, and lived in his house. The gayety of former years came back; cheerful songs and merry laughter were heard in the lately silent rooms. Rauchen himself grew younger, especially after the birth of a grandson, and often resumed his old place at the inn, telling the old stories with the old *gusto* over the ever-welcome ale. But one morning, not long after, he was found dead in his bed; a smile was on his face, and his limbs were stretched out as in peaceful repose.

There was no longer any tie to bind Carl to his native village. All his kin, as well as Katrine's, were in the grave. He was not bred a miller, and did not feel competent to manage the mill. Besides, his mind had received new ideas while he was in the army. He had heard of countries where men were equal before the laws, where the peasant owed no allegiance but to society. The germ of liberty had been planted in his breast, and he could no longer live contented with the rank in which he had been born. At least he wished that his children might grow up free from the chilling influences that had fallen upon him. At his earnest persuasion, Katrine consented that the mill should be sold, and soon after, with his wife and child, he went to Bremen and embarked for America.

We must now follow the absconding Stolzen, who, with his bag of thalers, had made good his escape into England. He lived in London, where he found society among his countrymen. His habitual shrewdness never deserted him, and from small beginnings he gradually amassed a moderate fortune. His first experiment in proposing for a wife satisfied him, but in a great city his sensual nature was fully developed. His brutal passions were unchecked; conscience seemed to have left him utterly. At length he began to think about quitting London. He was afraid to return to Germany, for, as he had left Carl to all appearance dead, he thought the officers of the law would seize him. He determined to go to Australia, and secured a berth in a clipper ship bound for Melbourne, but some accident prevented his reaching the pier in season; the vessel sailed without him, and was never heard of afterwards. Then he proposed to buy an estate in Canada; but the owner failed to make his appearance at the time appointed for the negotiation, and the bargain was not completed. At last he took passage for New York, whither a Hebrew acquaintance of his had gone, a year or two before, and was established as a broker. Upon arriving in that city, Stolzen purchased of an agent a tract of land in a Western State, situated on the shore of Lake Michigan; and after reserving a sum of money for immediate purposes, he deposited his funds with his friend, the broker, and started westward. He travelled the usual route by rail, then a short distance in a mail-coach, which carried him within six miles of his farm. Leaving his luggage to be sent for, he started to walk the remaining dis-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tance. It was a sultry day, and the prairie road was anything but pleasant to a pedestrian unaccustomed to heat and dust. After walking less than an hour, he determined to stop at a small house near the road, for rest, and some water to quench his thirst; but as he approached, the baying hounds, no less than the squalid children about the door, repelled him, and he went on to the next house. He now turned down a green lane, between rows of thrifty trees, to a neat log-cabin, whose nicely-plastered walls and the regular fence inclosing it testified to the thrift and good taste of the owner. He knocked; all was still. Again, and thirsty as he was, he was on the point of leaving, when he heard a step within. He waited; the door opened, and before him stood——Katrine!

She did not know him; but he had not forgotten that voluptuous figure nor those melting blue eyes. He preferred his requests, looking through the doorway at the same time to make sure that she had no protector. Katrine brought the stranger a gourd of water, and offered him a chair. She did not see the baleful eyes he threw after her as she went about her household duties. Stolzen had dropped from her firmament like a fallen and forgotten star. Secure in her unsuspecting innocence, she chirruped to her baby and resumed her sewing.

That evening, when Carl Proch returned from his field, after his usual hard day's labor, he found his wife on the floor, sobbing, speechless, and the child, unnoticed, crying in his cradle. His dog sat by the hearth with a look of almost intelligent sympathy, and whined as his master entered the room. He raised Katrine and held her in his arms like a child, covered her face with kisses, and implored her to speak. She seemed to be in a fearful dream, and shrunk from some imagined danger in the extremest terror. Gradually her sobs became less frequent, her tremors ceased, and she smiled upon the manly face that met hers, as though she had only suffered from an imaginary fright. But when she felt her hair floating upon her shoulders, saw the almost speaking face of the dog, Bruno, and became conscious of the cries of the neglected child, the wave of agony swept over her again, and she could utter only broken ejaculations. As word after word came from her lips, the unhappy husband's flesh tingled; his hair stiffened with horror; every nerve seemed to be strung with a new and maddening tension. There was for him no such thing as fatigue, no distance, no danger,—no law, no hereafter, no God. All thought and feeling were drowned in one wild desire for vengeance,—vengeance swift, terrible, and final.

He first caressed the dog as though he had been a brother; he put his arms about the shaggy neck, and shook each faithful paw; he made his wife caress him also. "God be praised, dear Katrine, for your protector, the dog!" said he. "Come, now, Bruno!"

Katrine saw him depart with his dog and gun; but if she guessed his errand, she did not dare remonstrate. He walked off rapidly,—the dog in advance, now and then baying as though he were on a trail.

In the night he returned, and he smiled grimly as he set down the rifle in its accustomed corner. His wife was waiting for him with intense anxiety. It was marvellous to her that he was so cheerful. He trotted her upon his knee, pressed her a hundred times to his bosom, kissed her forehead, lips, and cheeks, called her his pretty Kate, his dear wife, and every endearing name he knew. So they sat, like lovers in their teens, till the purpling east told of a new day.

The luggage of one Stolzen, a stage-coach passenger, remained at the tavern uncalled-for, for nearly a year. No one knew the man, and his disappearance, though a profound mystery, was not an uncommon thing in a new country. The Hebrew broker in New York received no answers to his letters, though he had carefully preserved the post-office address which Stolzen had given him. He began to fear lest he should be obliged to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fulfil the duty of heirship to the property deposited with him. To quiet his natural apprehensions in view of this event, he determined to follow Stolzen's track, as much of it as lay in *this* world, at least, and find out what had become of him. Upon arriving in the neighborhood, the Jew had a thorough search made. The country was scoured, and on the third day there was a discovery. A man walking on the sandy margin of a river, about two or three miles from Carl's house, saw a skull before him. As the steep bluff nearly overhung the spot where he stood, he conjectured that the body to which the skull belonged was to be found above on its verge. He climbed up, and there saw a headless skeleton. It was the body of Stolzen, as his memorandum-book and other articles showed. His pistol was in his pocket, and still loaded; that fact precluded the idea of suicide. Moreover, upon examining more closely, a bullet-hole was found in his breast-bone, around which the parts were broken *outwardly*, showing that the ball must have entered from behind. It was clear that Stolzen had been murdered.

The curse of Frau Proch had been most terribly fulfilled.

Circumstances soon pointed to Carl Proch as the perpetrator. A stranger, corresponding to the deceased in size and dress, had been seen, about the time of his disappearance, by the neighboring family, walking towards Proch's house; and on the evening of the same day an Irishman met Carl going at a rapid rate, with a gun on his shoulder, as though in furious pursuit of some one. A warrant for his arrest was issued, and he was lodged in jail to await his trial. If now the Hebrew had followed the *lex talionis*, after the manner of his race in ancient times, it might have fared badly with poor Carl. But as soon as the broker was satisfied beyond a peradventure that the depositor was acually dead, he hastened back to New York, joyful as a crow over a newly-found carcass, to administer upon the estate, leaving the law to take its own course with regard to the murderer.

Beyond the two facts just mentioned as implicating Carl, nothing was proved at the trial. Jameson, the lawyer, whom I mentioned at the beginning of this story, was engaged for the defence. He found Carl singularly uncommunicative; and though the government failed to make out a shadow of a case against his client, he was yet puzzled in his own mind by Carl's silence, and his real or assumed indifference. Katrine was in court with her child in her arms, watching the proceedings with the closest attention; though she, as well as Carl, was unable to understand any but the most familiar and colloquial English. The case was speedily decided; the few facts presented to the jury appeared to have no necessary connection, and there was no known motive for the deed. The jury unanimously acquitted Carl, and with his wife and boy he left the court-room. The verdict was approved by the spectators, for no man in the neighborhood was more universally loved and respected than Carl Proch.

Having paid Jameson his fee for his services, Carl was about to depart, when the lawyer's curiosity could be restrained no longer, and he called his client back to the private room of his office.

"Carl," said he, "you look like a good fellow, above anything mean or wicked; but yet I don't know what to make of you. Now you are entirely through with this scrape; you are acquitted; and I want to know what is the meaning of it all. I will keep it secret from all your neighbors. Did you kill Stolzen, or not?"

"Well, if I did," he answered, "can they do anything with me?"

"No," said Jameson.

"Not, if I acknowledge?"

"No, you have been acquitted by a jury; and by our law a man can never be tried twice for the same offence. You are safe, even if you should go into court and confess the deed."

"Well, then, I did kill him,—and I would again!"

For the moment, a fierce light gleamed upon the calm and kindly face. Then, feeling that his answer would give a false

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

view of the case, without the previous history of the parties, Carl sat down and in his broken English told to his lawyer the story I have here attempted to record. It was impossible to doubt a word of it; for the simplicity and pathos of the narrative were above all art. Here was a simple case, which the boldest inventor of schemes to punish villany would have been afraid to use. Its truth is the thing that most startles the mind accustomed to deal with fictions.

We leave Carl to return to his farm with his wife, for whom he had suffered so much, and with the hope that no further temptation may come to him in such a guise as almost to make murder a virtue.

THE TELEGRAPH.

THOU lonely Bay of Trinity,
  Ye bosky shores untrod,
Lean, breathless, to the white-lipped sea
  And hear the voice of God!

From world to world His couriers fly,
  Thought-winged and shod with fire;
The angel of His stormy sky
  Rides down the sunken wire.

What saith the herald of the Lord?—
  "The world's long strife is done!
Close wedded by that mystic cord,
  Her continents are one.

"And one in heart, as one in blood,
  Shall all her peoples be;
The hands of human brotherhood
  Shall clasp beneath the sea.

"Through Orient seas, o'er Afric's plain,
  And Asian mountains borne,
The vigor of the Northern brain
  Shall nerve the world outworn.

"From clime to clime, from shore to shore,
  Shall thrill the magic thread;
The new Prometheus steals once more
  The fire that wakes the dead!

"Earth gray with age shall hear the strain
  Which o'er her childhood rolled;
For her the morning stars again
  Shall sing their song of old.

"For, lo! the fall of Ocean's wall,
  Space mocked, and Time outrun!—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And round the world, the thought of all
  Is as the thought of one!"

Oh, reverently and thankfully
  The mighty wonder own!
The deaf can hear, the blind may see,
  The work is God's alone.

Throb on, strong pulse of thunder! beat
  From answering beach to beach!
Fuse nations in thy kindly heat,
  And melt the chains of each!

Wild terror of the sky above,
  Glide tamed and dumb below!
Bear gently, Ocean's carrier-dove,
  Thy errands to and fro!

Weave on, swift shuttle of the Lord,
  Beneath the deep so far,
The bridal robe of Earth's accord,
  The funeral shroud of war!

The poles unite, the zones agree,
  The tongues of striving cease;
As on the Sea of Galilee,
  The Christ is whispering, "Peace!"

THE BIRDS OF THE GARDEN AND ORCHARD.

THE singing-birds whose notes are familiar to us, in towns and villages and the suburbs of the city, are found in the breeding-season only in these places, and are strangers to the deep woods and solitary pastures. Most of our singing-birds follow in the wake of the pioneer of the wilderness, and increase in numbers with the clearing and settlement of the country,—not, probably, from any dependence on the protection of mankind, but on account of the increased abundance of the insect food upon which they subsist, consequent upon the tilling of the ground. It is well known that the labors of the husbandman cause an excessive multiplication of all those species of insects whose larvæ are cherished in the soil, and of all that infest the orchard and garden. The farm is capable of supporting insects just in proportion to its capacity for producing corn and fruit. Insects will multiply with their means of subsistence in and upon the earth; and birds, if not destroyed by artificial methods, will increase in proportion to the multiplication of those insects which constitute their principal food.

These considerations will sufficiently account for the fact, which often excites a little astonishment, that more singing-birds are found in the suburbs of the city, and among the parks and gardens of the city, than in the deep forest, where, even in the singing-season, the silence is sometimes melancholy. It is still to be remarked, that the species which are thus familiar in their habits do not include all the singing-birds, but they include all that are well known to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the majority of our people. These are the birds of the garden and orchard. There are many other species, wild and solitary in their habits, which are delightful songsters in uncultivated regions remote from the town. But even these are rare in the depths of the forest. They live on the edge of the wood and in the half-wooded pasture.

The birds of the garden and orchard have been frequently described, and their habits are very generally known; but in the usual descriptions little has been said of their powers and peculiarities of song. In the present sketches, I have given particular attention to the vocal powers of the different birds, and have endeavored to designate the parts which each one performs in the grand hymn of Nature. I shall first introduce the Song-Sparrow, (*Fringilla melodia*,) a little bird that is universally known and admired. The Song-Sparrow is the earliest visitant and the latest resident of the vocal tenants of the field. He is plain in his vesture, undistinguished from the female by any superiority of plumage, and comes forth in the spring and takes his departure in the autumn in the same suit of russet and gray by which he is always recognized.

In March, before the violet has ventured to peep out from the southern knoll of the pasture or the sunny brow of the hill, while the northern skies are liable to pour down at any hour a storm of sleet and snow, the Song-Sparrow, beguiled by southern winds, has already made his appearance, and, on still mornings, may be heard warbling his few merry notes, as if to make the earliest announcement of his arrival. He is, therefore, the true harbinger of spring, and, though not the sweetest songster of the woods, has the merit of bearing to man the earliest tidings of the opening year, and of declaring the first vernal promises of Nature. As the notes of those birds that sing only in the night come with a double charm to our ears, because they are harmonized by silence and hallowed by the hour that is sacred to repose,—in like manner does the Song-Sparrow delight us in tenfold measure, because he sings the sweet prelude to the universal hymn of Nature.

His haunts are the pastures which have been half reduced to tillage, and are still partially filled with wild shrubbery; for he is not so familiar in his habits as the Hair-bird, that comes close up to our door-step, to find the crumbs that are swept from our tables. Though his voice is constantly heard in the garden and orchard, he selects a more retired spot for his nest, preferring not to trust his progeny to the doubtful mercy of the lords of creation. In some secure retreat, under a tussock of herbage or a tuft of shrubbery, the female sits upon her nest of soft dry grass, containing four or five eggs, of a greenish white ground, almost entirely covered with brownish specks. Commencing in April, she rears three broods of young during the season, and her mate prolongs his notes until the last brood has flown from the nest.

The notes of the Song-Sparrow would not entitle him to be ranked among our principal singing-birds, were it not for the remarkable variations of his song, in which respect he is equalled, I think, by no other bird. Of these variations there are seven or eight which may be distinctly recognized, and differing enough to be considered separate tunes. The bird does not warble these in regular succession; he is in the habit of repeating one several times, and then leaves it, and repeats another in a similar manner. Mr. Paine * took note, on one occasion, of the number of times a Song-Sparrow sang each of the tunes, and the order of singing them. Of the tunes, as he had numbered them, the bird "sang No. 1, 27 times; No. 2, 36 times; No. 3, 23 times; No. 4, 19 times; No. 5, 21 times; No. 6, 32 times; No. 7, 18 times. Perhaps next he would sing No. 2, then perhaps No. 4, or 5, and so on." Mr. Paine

* Mr. Charles S. Paine, of East Randolph, who, I believe, was the first to observe this habit of the Song-Sparrow.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

adds, "Some males will sing each tune about fifty times, though seldom; some will only sing them from five to ten times. But as far as I have observed, each male has his seven songs. I have applied the rule to as many as a dozen different birds, and the result has been the same."

An individual will sometimes, for half a day, confine himself almost entirely to a few of these variations; but he will commonly sing each one more or less in the course of the day. I have observed also, that, when one principal singer takes up a particular tune, other birds in the vicinity will unite in the same. The several variations are mostly in triple time, a few in common time, and there is an occasional blending of both in the same tune, which consists usually of four bars or strains, sometimes five, though the song is frequently broken off at the end of the third strain. This habit of varying his notes through so many permutations, and the singularly fine intonations of many of them, entitle the Song-Sparrow to a very high rank as a singing-bird.

There is a manifest difference in the expression of these several tunes. The one which I have marked as No. 3 is particularly plaintive, and is usually in common time. No. 2 is the one which I think is most frequently sung. No. 5 is querulous and entirely unmusical. There is a remarkable precision in the song of this bird, and the finest singers are those which, in the language of musicians, have the least execution. There are some individuals that blend their notes together so promiscuously, and use so many flourishes, that it is difficult to identify their song, or to perceive its expression.

Whether these tunes of the Song-Sparrow express to his mate, or to others of his species, different sentiments, and convey different messages, or whether the bird adopts them for his own amusement, I have not been able to determine. Neither have I learned whether a certain hour of the day or a certain state of the weather predisposes him to sing a particular tune. This point may, perhaps, be determined by some future observer; and it may be ascertained that the birds of this species have their matins and their vespers, their songs of rejoicing and of complaining, of courtship when in presence of their mate, and of encouragement and solace when she is sitting upon her nest. As Nature has a benevolent and a definite object in every instinct which she has established among her creatures, it is not probable that this habit of the Song-Sparrow is the mere result of accident. All the variations of his song are given, with the specimens, at the end of this article, and, though individuals differ in their singing, the notes will afford the reader a good general idea of the several tunes.

Soon after the arrival of the Song-Sparrow, when the spring-flowers have begun to be conspicuous in the meadow, we are greeted by the more fervent and lengthened notes of the Vesper-bird, (*Fringilla graminea*,) poured out with a peculiarly pensive modulation. This species closely resembles the former, but may be distinguished from it, when on the wing, by two white lateral feathers in the tail. The chirp of the Song-Sparrow is also louder, and pitched on a lower key, than that of the present species. By careless observers, these two Finches, on account of the similarity in their general appearance and habits, are considered identical. The Vesper-bird, however, is the least familiar of the two, and, when both are singing at the same time, will be found to occupy a position more remote from the house than the other. In several localities, these two species are distinguished by the names of Bush-Sparrow and Ground-Sparrow, from their supposed different habits of placing their nests, one in a bush and the other on the ground. But they do not in fact differ in this respect, as each species occasionally builds in both ways.

The Vesper-bird attracts more general attention to his notes than the Sparrow, because he sings a longer, though a more monotonous song, and warbles with more

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fervency. His notes bear considerable resemblance to those of the Canary-bird, but they are more subdued and plaintive, and have a peculiar *reedy* sound, which is never perceived in the notes of the Canary. This bird is periodical in his habits of song, confining his lays to particular hours of the day and conditions of the weather. The Song-Sparrow, on the contrary, sings about equally from morning to night, and but little more at one hour than another; and the different performers of this species do not seem to join in concert. This habit renders the latter more companionable, at the same time it causes his notes to be less regarded than those of the Vesper-bird, who pours them forth more sparingly, and at regular periods.

The Vesper-bird begins with all his kindred in a general concert at early dawn, after which they are comparatively silent until sunset, when they repeat their concert, with still greater zeal than they chanted in the morning. It is from this circumstance that it has obtained the name it bears,—from its evening hymn, or vespers. I have heard this name applied to it only in one locality; but it is so precisely applicable to its habits, that I have thought it worthy of being retained as its distinguishing *cognomen*. There are particular states of the weather that frequently call out the birds of this species into a general concert at other periods of the day,—as when rain is suddenly followed by sunshine, or when a clear sky is suddenly darkened by clouds, presenting to them a sort of occasional morn and occasional even. It may be remarked, that you seldom hear one of these birds singing alone; but when one begins, all others in the vicinity immediately join him.

The usual resorts of the Vesper-bird are the pastures and the hay-fields; hence the name of Grass-Finch, by which he is usually distinguished. His voice is heard frequently by the rustic roadsides, where he picks up a considerable portion of his subsistence. This is the little bird that so generally serenades us during our evening walks, at a little distance from the town, and not so far into the woods as the haunts of the Thrushes. When we go out into the country, on pleasant days in June or July, at nightfall, we hear multitudes of them singing sweetly from a hundred different points in the fields and farms.

Among the birds which are endowed by Nature with the gift of song in connection with gaudy plumage is the American Goldfinch, or Hemp-bird, (*Fringilla tristis*,) one of the most interesting and delicate of the feathered tribe. Of all our birds this bears the closest resemblance to the Canary, both in his plumage and in the notes of his song. He cannot be ranked with the finest of our songsters, being deficient in compass and variety. But he has great sweetness of tone, and is equalled by few birds in the rapidity of his execution. His note of complaint is exactly like that of the Canary, and is heard at almost all times of the year. He utters also, when flying, a very animated series of notes, during the repeated undulations of his flight, and they seem to be uttered with each effort he makes to rise.

It is remarkable that this bird, though he often rears two broods in a season, does not begin to build his nest until July, after the first broods of the Robin and the Song-Sparrow have flown from their nests. Mr. Augustus Fowler * is of opinion, from his observation of their habits of feeding their young, that the cause of this procrastination is, "that they would be unable to find, in the spring and early summer, those new and milky seeds which are the necessary food of their young," and takes occasion to al-

* Mr. Augustus Fowler of Danversport, who has made one of the finest collections of the eggs of native birds. His drawings of the same are beautifully executed, accompanied by representations of the nests and of the foliage that surrounded them. This gentleman and his brother, Mr. S. P. Fowler, have found leisure, during the intervals of their occupation in a mechanical art, to acquire a knowledge of certain branches of natural history which would do honor to a professor.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lude to that beneficent law of Nature which provides that these birds "should not bring forth their young until the very time when those seeds used by them for food have passed into the milk, in which state they are easily dissolved by the stomach, and when an abundant supply may always be found."

The Hemp-birds are remarkable for associating at a certain season, and singing, as it were, in choirs. "During spring and summer," says Mr. Fowler, "they rove about in small flocks, and in July will assemble together in considerable numbers on a particular tree, seemingly for no other purpose than to sing. These concerts are held by them on the forenoon of each day, for a week or ten days, after which they soon commence building their nests. I am inclined to believe that this is their time of courtship, and that they have a purpose in these meetings beside that of singing. If perchance one is heard in the air, the males utter their call-note with great emphasis, particularly if the new-comer be a female; and while in her undulating flight she describes a circle, preparatory to alighting, they will stand almost erect, move their heads to the right and left, and burst simultaneously into song."

While engaged in these concerts, it would seem as if they were governed by some rule, that enabled them to time their voices, and to swell or diminish the volume of sound. Some of this effect is undoubtedly produced by the gradual manner in which the different voices join in harmony, beginning with one or two, and increasing in numbers in a sort of geometrical progression, until all are singing at once, and then in the same gradual manner becoming silent. This produces the effect of a perfect *crescendo* and *diminuendo*. Beginning, as it seems, at a distance, one voice leads on another, and the numbers multiply until they make a loud shout, which dies away gradually until one single voice winds up the chorus. These concerts are repeated at intervals, sometimes for an hour in duration.

Another peculiar habit of the Hemp-bird is that of building a nest, and then tearing it to pieces before any eggs have been deposited in it, and using the materials to make a new nest in another locality. In former years I have repeatedly watched this singular operation, in the Lombardy poplars that stood before my study-windows. I have thought that the male bird only was addicted to this practice, and that this might be his method of amusement while unprovided with a partner. The nest of the Hemp-bird is made of cotton, the down of the fern, and other soft materials, woven together with threads and the fibres of bark, and lined with thistle-down, if it be late enough to obtain it, and sometimes with cow's hair. It is commonly placed in the fork of the slender branches of a maple, linden, or poplar, and is fastened to them with singular ingenuity.

Among the earliest songsters of spring, occasionally tuning his voice before the arrival of the multitudinous choir, is the Crimson Finch or American Linnet (*Fringilla purpurea*). I have frequently heard his notes on warm days in March, and once, in a very mild season, I heard one warbling cheerily on the 18th of February. But the Linnet does not persevere like the Song-Sparrow, after he has once commenced. His voice is only occasionally heard, until the middle of April, after which he is a very constant singer.

The notes of this bird are very simple and melodious, and some individuals greatly excel others in their powers of song. It is generally believed that the young males are the best singers, and that age diminishes their vocal capacity. The greater number utter only a few strains, resembling the notes of the Warbling Fly-catcher, (*Vireo gilvus*,) and these are constantly repeated during the greater part of the day. His song consists of four or five bars or strains; but there are individuals that extend them *ad libitum*, varying their notes after the manner of the Canary. The latter, however, sings with more precision, and is louder and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shriller in his tones. I have not observed that this bird is more prone to sing in the morning and evening than at noonday and at all hours.

I have alluded to the fact that the finest singing-birds build their nests and seek their food either on the ground or among the shrubbery and the lower branches of trees, and that, when singing, they are commonly perched rather low. The Linnet is an exception to this general habit of the singing-birds, and, in company with the Warbling Fly-catchers, he is commonly high up in an elm or some other tall tree, and almost entirely out of sight, when exercising himself in song. It is this preference for the higher branches of trees that enables these birds, as well as the Golden Robin, to be denizens of the city. Hence they may be heard singing as freely and melodiously from the trees on Boston Common as in the wild-wood or orchard in the country.

I have seen the Linnet frequently in confinement; but he does not sing so well in a cage as in a state of freedom. His finest and most prolonged strains are delivered while on the wing. On such occasions only does he sing with fervor. While perched on a tree, his song is short and not greatly varied. If you closely watch his movements when he is singing, he may be seen on a sudden to take flight, and, while poising himself in the air, though still advancing, he pours out a continued strain of melody, not surpassed by the notes of any other bird. On account of the infrequency of these occasions, it is seldom we have an opportunity to witness a full exhibition of the musical powers of the Linnet.

The male American Linnet is crimson on the head, neck, and throat, dusky on the upper part of its body, and beneath somewhat straw-colored. It is remarkable that a great many individuals are destitute of this color, being plainly clad, like the female. These are supposed to be old birds, and the loss of color is attributed to age. The same change takes place when the bird is confined.

The little bird whose notes serve more than those of any other species to enliven the summer noondays in our villages is the House-Wren (*Troglodytes fulvus*). It is said to reside and rear its young chiefly in the Middle States; but it is far from being uncommon in Massachusetts, and, as it extends its summer migrations to Labrador, it is probable that it breeds there also. It is evident, however, that its breeding-places are not confined to northern latitudes. It is a migratory bird, is never seen here in winter, but commonly arrives in May and returns south early in October. It builds in a hollow tree, like the Blue-bird, or in a box or other vessel provided for it, and by furnishing such accommodations we may easily entice one to make its home in our inclosures.

The Wren is a very active bird, and one of the most restless of the feathered tribe. He is continually in motion, and even when singing he is always flitting about and changing his position. We see him in almost all places, as it were, at the same moment of time,—now warbling in ecstasy from the roof of a shed, then, with his wings spread and feathers ruffled, scolding furiously at a Blue-bird or a Swallow that has alighted on his box, or driving a Robin from a cherry-tree that stands near his habitation. The next instant we observe him running along on a stone wall, and diving down and in and out, from one side to the other, through the openings between the stories, with all the nimbleness of a squirrel. He is on the ridge of the barn-roof, he is peeping into the dove-cote, he is in the garden under the currant-bushes, or chasing a spider or a moth under a cabbage-leaf; again he is on the roof of the shed, warbling vociferously; and all these manœuvres and peregrinations have occupied hardly a minute, so rapid and incessant is he in his motions.

The notes of the Wren are very lively and garrulous, and, if not uttered more frequently during the heat of the day, are certainly more noticeable at this hour. There is a concert at noonday, as well as in the morning and evening, among

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the birds, and in the former the Wren is one of the principal musicians. After the full rays of the sun have silenced the early performers, the Song-Sparrow and the Red Thrush continue to sing, at intervals, the greater part of the day. The Wren is likewise heard at all hours; but when the languishing heat of noon has arrived, and most of the birds are silent, the few that continue to sing become more than usually vocal, and seem to form a select company. They appear, indeed, to prefer the noonday, because the general silence that prevails at this hour renders their voices more distinguishable than at other times. The birds which are thus, as it were, associated with the Wren, in this noonday concert, are the Bobolink, the Cat-bird, and the two Warbling Fly-catchers, occasionally joined by the few and simple notes of the Summer Yellow-bird. If we are in the vicinity of the deep woods, we may also hear, at this hour, the loud and shrill voice of the Golden-Crowned Thrush, a bird that is partial to the heat of noon.

Of all these, however, the Wren is the most remarkable, having a note that is singularly varied and animated. He exhibits great compass and power of execution, but wants variety in his tones. He begins very sharp and shrill, like a grasshopper, then suddenly falls to a series of low guttural notes, and ascends, like the rolling of a drum, to another series of high notes, rapidly trilled. Almost without a pause, he recommences with his querulous insect-chirp, and proceeds through the same trilling and demi-semiquavering as before. He is not particular about the part of the song which he makes his closing note, but will leave off right in the middle of a strain, when he appears to be in the height of ecstasy, to pick up a spider or a fly.

As the Wren raises two broods of young in a season, his notes are prolonged to a late period of the summer, being frequently heard in the second or third week in August. He leaves for a southern clime about the first of October. In his migratory habits he differs from the European Wren, which is a constant resident in his native regions.

Our American birds, like the American flowers, have not been celebrated in classic song. They are scarcely known, except to our own people, and they have not in general been exalted by praise above their real merits. We read, both in prose and verse, the praises of the European Lark, Linnet, and Nightingale, and the English Robin Redbreast has been immortalized in song. But the American Robin, (*Turdus migratorius,*) though surnamed Redbreast, is a bird of different species and different habits. Little has been written about him, and he enjoys but little celebrity; he has never been puffed and overpraised, and, though universally admired, the many who admire him are diffident all the while, lest they are mistaken in their judgment and are wasting their admiration upon an object that is unworthy of it, and whose true merits fall short of their own estimate.

I shall not ask pardon of those critics who are always canting about genius—and who would probably deny this gift to the Robin, because he cannot cry like a chicken or squall like a cat, and because with his charming strains he does not mingle all sorts of discords and incongruous sounds—for assigning to the Robin the highest rank as a singing-bird. Let them say of him, in the cant of modern criticism, that his performances cannot be great, because they are faultless; it is enough for me, that his mellow notes, heard at the earliest flush of morning, in the more busy hour of noon, or the quiet lull of evening, come upon the ear in a stream of unqualified melody, as if he had learned to sing under the direct instruction of that beautiful Dryad who taught the Lark and the Nightingale. The Robin is surpassed by certain birds in some particular qualities. The Mocking-bird has more power, the Red Thrush more variety, the Vesper-bird more execution, and the Bobolink more animation; but each of these birds has more faults than the Robin, and would be less

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

esteemed as a constant companion, a vocalist for all hours, whose strains never tire and never offend.

There are thousands who admire the Mocking-bird, because, after pouring forth a continued stream of ridiculous and disagreeable sounds, or a series of two or three notes repeated more than a hundred times in uninterrupted and monotonous succession, he condescends to utter a single delightfully modulated strain. He often brings his tiresome *extravaganzas* to a magnificent climax of melody, and just as often concludes an inimitable chant with a most contemptible bathos. But the notes of the Robin are all melodious, all delightful,—loud without vociferation, mellow without monotony, fervent without ecstasy, and combining more of mellowness of tone, plaintiveness, cheerfulness, and propriety of execution, than those of any other bird.

The Robin is the Philomel of our spring and summer mornings in New England, and in all the country north and west of these States. Without his sweet notes, the mornings would be like a vernal landscape without flowers, or a summer-evening sky without tints. He is the chief performer in the delightful anthem that welcomes the rising day. Of the others, the best are but accompaniments of more or less importance. Remove the Robin from this woodland orchestra, and it would be left without a *soprano*. Over all the northern parts of this continent, wherever there are any human settlements, these birds are numerous and familiar. There is probably not an orchard in all New England that is not supplied with several of these musicians. When we consider the millions thus distributed over this broad country, we can imagine the sublimity of that chorus which, from the middle of April until the last of July, must daily ascend to heaven from the voices of these birds, not one male of which is silent, on any pleasant morning, from the earliest flush of dawn until sunrise.

In my boyhood, an early morning-walk was one of my favorite recreations, and never can I forget those delightful matins that awaited me at every turn. Even then I wondered that so little admiration was expressed for the song of the Robin, who seemed to me to be worthy of the highest regard. The Robin, when reared in confinement, is one of the most affectionate and interesting of birds. His powers of song are likewise susceptible of great improvement. Though not prone to imitation, he may be taught to sing tunes, and to imitate the notes of other birds. I have heard one whistle "Over the water to Charlie" as well as it could be played with a fife. Indeed, this bird is so tractable, that I believe any well-directed efforts would never fail of teaching him to sing any simple melody.

But what do we care about his power of learning artificial music? Even if he could be taught to perform like a *maestro*, this would not enhance his value as a minstrel of the woods. We are concerned with the birds only as they are in a state of nature. It is the simplicity of the songs of birds, as I have before remarked, that constitutes their principal charm; and were the Robins so changed in their nature as to relinquish their native notes, and sing only tunes hereafter, we should listen to them with as much indifference as to the whistling of boys in the streets.

In the elms on Boston Common, and in all the lofty trees in the suburbs as well as in the country villages, are two little birds whose songs are heard daily and hourly, from the middle of May until the latter part of summer. These are the Warbling Fly-catchers (*Vireo gilvus and V. olivaceus*). The first is commonly designated as the Warbling Vireo, the second as the Red-eyed Vireo. The former arrives about a week or ten days earlier than the other, and becomes silent likewise at a somewhat earlier period. Both species are very similar in their habits, frequenting the villages in preference to the woods, singing at all hours of the day, particularly at noon, taking all their insect prey from the leaves and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

branches of trees, or seizing it as it flits by their perch, and amusing themselves, while thus employed, with oft-repeated fragments of song. Each builds a pensile nest, or places it in the fork of the slender branches of a tree. I have seen a nest of the Warbling Vireo placed less than fifteen feet from the ground, on a pear-tree, directly opposite the window of a chamber that was constantly occupied; but the nests of both species are usually suspended at a considerable height from the ground.

The notes of the Warbling Vireo have been described by the words, "Brigadier, Brigadier, Bridget." They are few, simple, and melodious, and being often repeated, they form a very important part of the sylvan music of cultivated and thickly-settled places. It is difficult to obtain sight of this little warbler while he is singing, on account of his small size, the olive color of his plumage, and his habit of perching among the dense foliage of the trees.

The Red-eyed Vireo is more generally known by his note, because he is particularly vocal during the heat of the long summer-days, when other birds are comparatively silent. The modulation of his notes is similar to that of the common Robin, but his tones are sharper, and he sings in a very desultory manner, leaving off very frequently in the middle of a strain to seize a moth or a beetle. Singing, while he is engaged in song, never seems to be his sole employment. This is the little bird that warbles for us late in the summer, after almost all other birds have become silent, uttering his moderate notes, as if for his own amusement, during all the heat of the day, from the trees by the roadsides and in our inclosures. We might then suppose him to be repeating very moderately the words, "Do you hear me? Do you see me?" with the rising inflection of the voice, and with a pause after each sentence, as if he waited for an answer.

As soon as the cherry-tree is in blossom, and when the oak and the maple are beginning to unfold their plaited leaves, the loud and mellow notes of the Golden Robin (*Icterus Baltimore*) are heard for the first time in the year. I have never known the birds of this species to arrive before this date, and they seem to be governed by the supply of their insect food, which probably becomes abundant simultaneously with the flowering of the orchards. These birds may from that time be observed diligently hunting among the branches and foliage of the trees, and they appear to make a particular examination of the blossoms, from which they obtain a great variety of flies and beetles that are lodged in them. While thus employed, the bird frequently utters his brief, but loud and melodious notes; but he sings, like the Vireo, only while attending to the wants of life. Almost all remarkable singing-birds, when warbling, give themselves up entirely to song, and pay no regard to other demands upon their time until they have concluded. But the Golden Robin never relaxes from his industry, nor remains stationed upon the branch of a tree for the sole purpose of singing. He sings, like an industrious maid-of-all-work, only while employed in the ordinary concerns of life.

The Golden Robin is said to inhabit North America from Canada to Mexico; but there is reason to believe that the species is most abundant in the north-eastern parts of the continent, and that a greater number breed in the New England States than either south or west of this section. They are also more numerous in the suburbs of cities and towns than in the ruder and more primitive parts of the country. Their peculiar manner of protecting their pensile nests, by hanging them from the extremities of the lofty branches of an elm or other tall tree, enables the bird to rear its young with great security, even in the heart of the city. The only animals that are able to reach their nests are the smaller squirrels, which sometimes descend the long, slender branches upon which they are suspended, and devour the eggs.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This depredation I have never witnessed; but I have seen the Red Squirrel descend in this manner to devour the crysalis of a certain insect, which was rolled up in a leaf.

The ways and manners of the Golden Robin are very interesting. He is remarkable for his vivacity, and his bright plumage renders all his movements conspicuous. His plumage needs no description, since every one is familiar with its colors, as they are seen like flashes of fire among the trees. The bird derives its specific name (Baltimore) from the resemblance of its colors to the livery of Lord Baltimore of Maryland. The name of a bird ought to have either a sylvan or a poetic origin. This has neither. I prefer, therefore, the common and expressive name of Golden Robin.

This bird is supposed to possess considerable power of musical imitation. Still it may be observed that in all cases he gives the notes of those birds only whose voice resembles his own. Thus, he often repeats the song of the Red-bird, but in doing this he varies his own notes no more than he might do without meaning any imitation. Though he repeats but few notes, he utters them with great variety of modulation. Sometimes for several days he confines himself to a single strain, and afterwards for about an equal space of time he will adopt another strain. Sometimes he lengthens his brief notes into an extended melody, and sings in a sort of ecstasy, like the birds of the Finch tribe. Such musical paroxysms are exceedingly rare in his case, and seem to be occasioned by some momentary exultation.

The Golden Robin rears but one brood of young in this part of the country, and his cheerful notes are discontinued soon after the young have left their nest. The song of the old bird seems after this period hardly necessary to the offspring, who keep up an incessant chirping from the moment of leaving their nest until they are able to accompany the old ones to the woods, whither they retire in the latter part of the season. It is remarkable, that, after a perfect silence of two or three weeks after this time, the Golden Robins suddenly make their appearance again for a few days, uttering the same merry notes with which they hailed the arrival of summer. They soon disappear again, and before autumn arrives they make their annual journey to the South, where they pass the winter.

There is no singing-bird in New England that enjoys the notoriety of the Bobolink (*Icterus agripennis*). He is like a rare wit in our social or political circles. Everybody is talking about him and quoting his remarks, and all are delighted with his company. He is not without great merits as a songster; but he is well known and admired, because he is showy, noisy, and flippant, and sings only in the open field, and frequently while poised on the wing, so that everybody who hears him can see him, and know who is the author of the strains that afford him so much delight. He sings also at broad noonday, when everybody is out, and is seldom heard before sunrise, while other birds are pouring forth their souls in a united concert of praise. He waits until the sun is up, and when most of the early performers have become silent, as if determined to secure a good audience before exhibiting his powers.

The Bobolink, or Conquedle, has unquestionably great talents as a musician. In the grand concert of Nature it is he who performs the *recitative* parts, which he delivers with the utmost fluency and rapidity; and one must be a careful listener, not to lose many of his words. He is plainly the merriest of all the feathered creation, almost continually in motion, and singing upon the wing, apparently in the greatest ecstasy of joy.

There is not a plaintive strain in his whole performance. Every sound is as merry as the laugh of a young child; and one cannot listen to him without fancying that he is indulging in some jocose raillery of his companions. If we suppose him to be making love, we cannot look upon him as very deeply enamored, but

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rather as highly delighted with his spouse, and overflowing with rapturous admiration. The object of his love is a neatly formed bird, with a mild expression of countenance, a modest and amiable deportment, and arrayed in the plainest apparel. It is evident that she does not pride herself upon the splendor of her costume, but rather on its neatness, and on her own feminine graces. She must be entirely without vanity, unless we suppose that it is gratified by observing the pomp and display which are made by her partner, and by listening to his delightful eloquence of song: for if we regard him as an orator, it must be allowed that he is unsurpassed in fluency and rapidity of utterance; and if we regard him only as a musician, he is unrivalled in brilliancy of execution.

Vain are all attempts, on the part of other birds, to imitate his truly original style. The Mocking-bird gives up the attempt in despair, and refuses to sing at all when confined near one in a cage. I cannot look upon him as ever in a very serious humor. He seems to be a lively, jocular little fellow, who is always jesting and bantering, and when half a dozen different individuals are sporting about in the same orchard, I often imagine that they might represent the persons dramatized in some comic opera. These birds never remain stationary upon the bough of a tree, singing apparently for their own solitary amusement; but they are ever in company, and passing to and fro, often commencing their song upon the extreme end of the bough of an apple-tree, then suddenly taking flight, and singing the principal part while balancing themselves on the wing. The merriest part of the day with these birds is the later afternoon, during the hour preceding dewfall, and before the Robins and Thrushes commence their evening hymn. Then, assembled in company, it would seem as if they were practising a cotillon upon the wing, each one singing to his own movements, as he sallies forth and returns,—and nothing can exceed their apparent merriment.

The Bobolink usually commences his warbling just after sunrise, when the Robin, having sung from the earliest dawn, brings his performance to a close. Nature seems to have provided that the serious parts of her musical entertainment in the morning shall first be heard, and that the lively and comic strains shall follow them. In the evening this order is reversed; and after the comedy is concluded, Nature lulls us to meditation and repose by the mellow notes of the little Vesper-bird, and the pensive and still more melodious strains of the solitary Thrushes.

In pleasant, sunshiny weather, the Bobolink seldom flies without singing, often hovering on the wing over the place where his mate is sitting upon her ground-built nest, and pouring forth his notes with great loudness and fluency. The Bobolink is one of our social birds, one of those species that follow in the footsteps of man, and multiply with the progress of agriculture. He is not a frequenter of the woods; he seems to have no taste for solitude. He loves the orchard and the mowing-field, and many are the nests which are exposed by the scythe of the haymaker, if the mowing be done early in the season. Previously to the settlement of America, these birds must have been comparatively rare in the New England States, and were probably confined to the open prairies and savannas in the northwestern territory.

THE O'LINCON FAMILY.

A flock of merry singing-birds were sporting in the grove;
Some were warbling cheerily, and some were making love:
There were Bobolincon, Wadolincon, Winter-seeble, Conquedle,—
A livelier set was never led by tabor, pipe, or fiddle,—
Crying, "Phew, shew, Wadolincon, see, see, Bobolincon,
Down among the tickletops, hiding in the buttercups!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

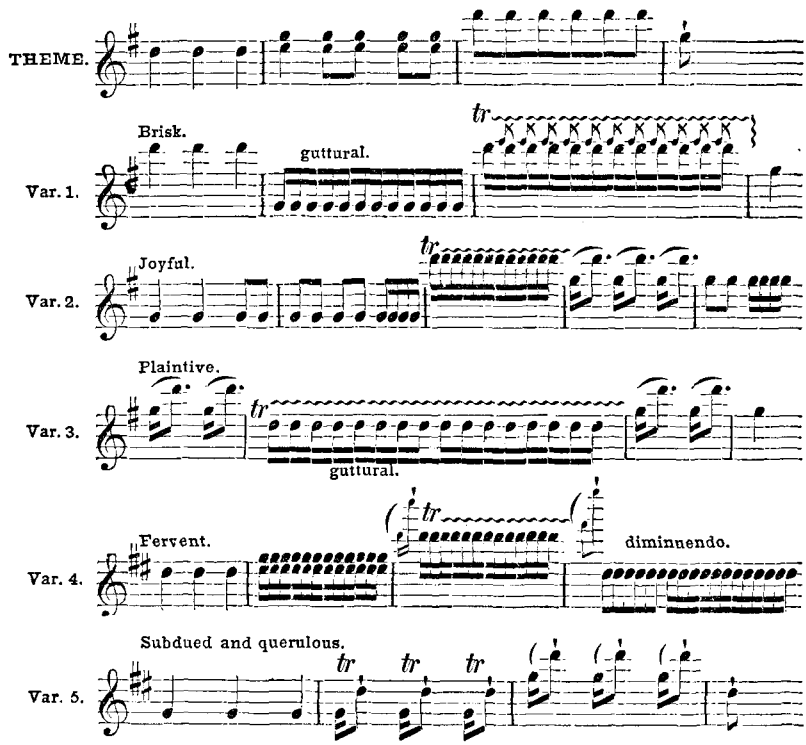
I know the saucy chap, I see his shining cap
Bobbing in the clover there,—see, see, see! "

Up flies Bobolincon, perching on an apple-tree,
Startled by his rival's song, quickened by his raillery.
Soon he spies the rogue afloat, curvetting in the air,
And merrily he turns about, and warns him to beware!
" 'Tis you that would a-wooing go, down among the rushes O!
But wait a week, till flowers are cheery,—wait a week, and, ere you marry,
Be sure of a house wherein to tarry!
Wadolink, Whiskodink, Tom Denny, wait, wait, wait! "

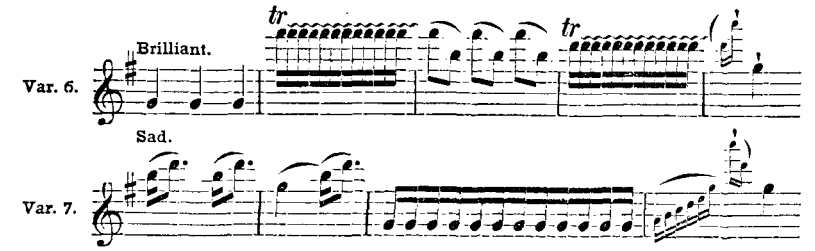
Every one's a funny fellow; every one's a little mellow;
Follow, follow, follow, follow, o'er the hill and in the hollow!
Merrily, merrily, there they hie; now they rise and now they fly;
They cross and turn, and in and out, and down in the middle, and wheel about,—
With a " Phew, shew, Wadolincon! listen to me, Bobolincon!—
Happy's the wooing that's speedily doing, that's speedily doing,
That's merry and over with the bloom of the clover!
Bobolincon, Wadolincon, Winterseeble, follow, follow me! "

Oh, what a happy life they lead, over the hill and in the mead!
How they sing, and how they play! See, they fly away, away!
Now they gambol o'er the clearing,—off again, and then appearing;
Poised aloft on quivering wing, now they soar, and now they sing:—
" We must all be merry and moving; we must all be happy and loving;
For when the midsummer has come, and the grain has ripened its ear,
The haymakers scatter our young, and we mourn for the rest of the year.
Then Bobolincon, Wadolincon, Winterseeble, haste, haste, away! "

SONG OF THE SONG-SPARROW, AND ITS VARIATIONS.

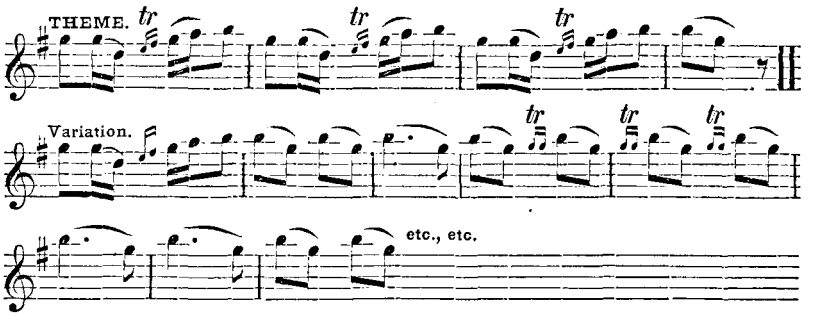


PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

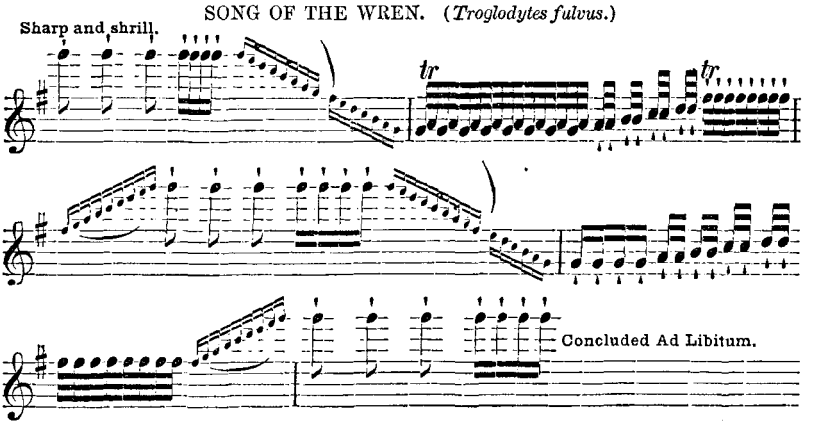


NOTE.—The notes marked *guttural* seem to me to be performed by a rapid trilling of these notes with their octave. It should be added, that no bird sings constantly in so regular time as is represented above, and the intervals between the high and low notes are very irregular. Both the time and the tune are in great measure *ad libitum.*

SONG OF THE LINNET. (*Fringilla purpurea.*)



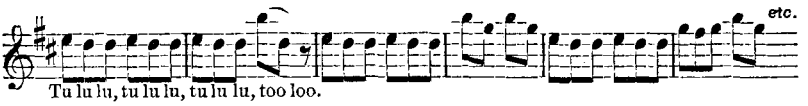
SONG OF THE WREN. (*Troglodytes fulvus.*)



SONG OF THE ROBIN. (*Turdus migratorius.*)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

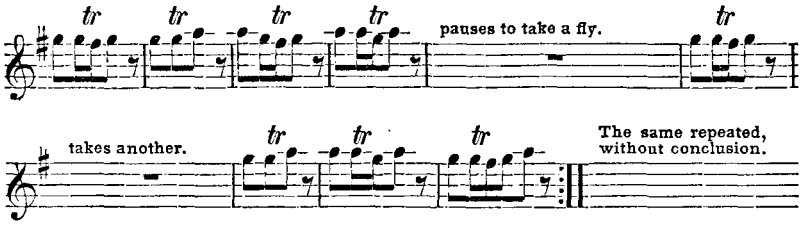
Another — Flexibly modulated, as if pronouncing the words below.



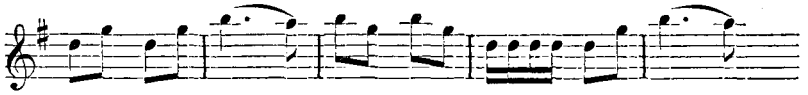
NOTE.—The Robin is continually varying his notes; so that the two specimens, as given above, may be considered but the *theme* upon which he constructs his melody.

SONG OF THE WARBLING VIREO. (*V. Gilvus.*)

SONG OF THE RED-EYED VIREO. (*V. olivaceus.*)



SONG OF THE GOLDEN ROBIN. (*Icterus Baltimore.*)



THE OLD WELL.

ON a bright April morning many years ago, a stout, red-faced old gentleman, Geoffrey Purcill, followed by several workmen bearing shovels and pick-axes, took his way to a little knoll on which stood a wide-spreading chestnut-tree. When they reached the top of the knoll, the old man paused a moment and then struck his gold-headed cane upon the ground at some little distance from the trunk of the tree, saying, "Dig here."

The workmen looked at each other and then at their master.

"It would be useless to dig a well here, Sir," said one of the workmen, very respectfully,—"no water would ever come into it."

"Who asked for your opinion?" inquired Geoffrey, in an angry tone. "Do as I bid you;—the well shall be digged here, and water *shall* come into it."

The man ventured no further remon-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

strance; he took off his jacket, and struck his pickaxe into the hard, dry soil near the point where the cane rested.

Geoffrey Purcill was a choleric old gentleman, who, having had his own way all his life, was by no means inclined to forego that privilege now that he was advanced in years. As he sat beneath the chestnut-tree, one warm spring day, he felt very thirsty, and he suddenly thought what a good thing it would be to have a well there, so that he might refresh himself with a draught of clear, cool water, without the trouble of returning to the house. The more thirsty he grew, the pleasanter seemed the project to him,—a large, deep well, neatly stoned, with a sweep and buckets,—it would be a pretty object to look at, as well as comfort to man and beast. The well should be digged forthwith, and what Geoffrey Purcill once resolved upon he was not slow to execute; and, despite the remonstrances of those who knew better than he, the work was commenced at once.

A more unpromising place for a well could not have been selected in all his extensive grounds; but he was not a man to be patiently baffled even by Nature herself, and he stood looking with grim satisfaction at the hole which rapidly widened and deepened under the vigorous efforts of his sturdy workmen.

Day after day old Geoffrey watched his workmen on the knoll. The well increased in size till it was large enough to have watered a whole caravan,—but the desert of Sahara itself was not drier. Geoffrey fumed, raved, and swore; and when two of the men were killed by the falling of the earth, and the rest absolutely refused to work any longer, he bade them go, a pack of ungrateful scoundrels as they were, and, procuring more laborers, declared "he would dig there till the Devil came to fetch him."

Geoffrey was as good as his word;—he labored with a pertinacity worthy of a better object, and dug deeper into the bowels of the earth, and partly stoned his well,—but no water, save that which fell from heaven, ever appeared in it.

And when old Geoffrey was gathered to his fathers, he left his house and grounds to his only daughter, Eleanor Purcill, on the express condition that the well was not to be filled up, but to remain open till water did come into it.

One July day, when Geoffrey Purcill had been some twenty years with his fathers, or with Satan, (which two destinies might have been one and the same, after all, for he came of a turbulent, wicked race,) two children, a boy and girl, sat on the brink of the well and looked down into it.

It was half filled with the rubbish of the fallen stones, but it was still deep, and dark enough to tempt their curious eyes into trying to discover what lay hidden in its shadowy depths. The great chestnut-tree, rich with drooping, feathery blossoms, shaded them from the burning sun,—a few stray beams only finding their way through the glossy leaves, and resting on the golden curls of the girl.

The boy leaned over the well, and peered into it;—the little girl bent forward, as if to do the same, but drew back again.

"Take hold of my hand, Mark," said she, "and let me lean over as you do."

"What do you want to look in for?" asked the boy,—"there is nothing to see. Oh, yes," continued he, mischievously, "there is a horrid dragon, just such as St. George fought with, lying all curled up in the bottom of the well, with fire and smoke coming out of his mouth."

Rosamond Purcill was too true a descendant of old Geoffrey to be frightened at the thought of a dragon. She caught hold of Mark's arm to steady herself, and leaned over the well.

"Let me see! let me see!" cried she, eagerly.

Mark made one or two feints of pushing her in, but at last held her firmly by the waist, while she looked in vain for the fabulous monster below.

"Where is he, Mark? I don't see anything, and I don't believe you saw him."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Oh, yes, I did," said Mark;—"there, don't you see the end of his tail sticking out from under the largest stone? May-be he has had one little girl for breakfast this morning, and don't care about another for luncheon, or else he would spring up after you, and gobble you up in a minute."

"What stories, Mark! Aunt Eleanor says there are no dragons, nor ever were."

"Pooh!" retorted Mark, contemptuously,—"Aunt Eleanor has not seen everything that there is to be seen in the world. Look again, Rosy."

Again the little curly head was bent over the well, somewhat puzzled which to believe, Aunt Eleanor or Mark, but half-inclined to credit Mark's eyes rather than Aunt Eleanor's words.

"Do you think that can be one of his scales?" asked she, pointing to a small piece of tin which glittered in a stray sunbeam among the stones.

Mark's eyes followed the direction of her finger, and he was about to declare that it must be a scale that the dragon had scraped off his back, wriggling among the stones, when both children were startled by a loud voice calling out, "What are you doing, children? You will fall into the well and break your good-for-nothing little necks!"

Mark and Rosamond drew back, and saw a young man, their brother Bradford, with a basket and a fishing-rod in his hand, coming up the knoll.

"Why are you here, Mark?" asked he. "Aunt Eleanor thinks it a dangerous place, and has forbidden you to play here."

Mark looked up at his brother. "I come," said he, sturdily, "for that very reason, — because I am told not to. I won't mind Aunt Eleanor, nor any other woman."

Bradford shook his head and burst out into a laugh. "Ah, Mark, my boy," said he, with a serious, comical air, "it will do very well for you to talk,—you will find out, sooner or later, that all men have to do just what women wish."

Mark opened his incredulous eyes, and inwardly resolved that this should never be the case with him; and considering that Bradford was only eighteen, it is somewhat remarkable that he should have gained so much wisdom, either by observation or experience, at so early an age.

"Mark says," chimed in Rosamond, "that there is a dragon at the bottom of the well; and I want to see him."

"A dragon?" cried Bradford,—"Mark is a story-teller, and you are a goose;—but if there is one, I will catch him for you";—and he stood on the brink of the well, and sportively threw his line into it.

"You are a pretty fellow to talk about catching a dragon, Brad!" retorted Mark, a little nettled at the tone in which Bradford spoke of him,—"you can't even catch a shiner!"—and he glanced at Bradford's empty basket.

Bradford laughed louder than before. "And for that very reason I expect to catch the dragon. One kind of a line will not catch all kinds of fish; and this line may be good for nothing but dragons, after all.—There! I've got a bite. Stand back, Rosy," cried he, "the dragon will be on the grass in a minute."

Bradford tried to pull up his line, but it was either entangled among the stones, or had some heavy object attached to it, for the rod bent beneath the weight as he with a strong pull endeavored to draw up his prize. Rosamond's eyes opened to their widest extent, and, fully expecting to see the dragon swinging wide-mouthed in the air over her head, drew a little closer to Mark, who, on his part, wondered what Bradford was at, and whether he was not playing some trick upon him.

When the end of the line rose to the top of the well, they saw suspended by the two hooks, not a winged, scaly monster, but a small rusty box, in the fastenings of which the hooks had caught.

Rosamond drew a long breath,—"Is that all, Bradford? I am so sorry! I thought, to be sure, you had the dragon."

"Never mind the dragon, Rosy," cried he; "let us see what I have caught.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Who knows but the purse of Fortunatus or the slipper of Cinderella may be in here?—they have been lost for many a day, and nobody knows where they are."

Bradford knelt down on the grass, and, unhooking his line, strove to undo the rusty hasp; but it resisted all the efforts of his fingers, and it was only by the aid of a knife and a stone that he opened the box. In it was a morocco case, much discolored, but still in tolerable preservation, from which he drew a small manuscript book.

Rosamond's disappointment was greater than before. "It is nothing but a writing-book, after all," said she. "I wish you had not said anything about the purse or slipper, and then I should never have thought of them. You never heard anybody say where they thought the purse and slipper were hid,—did you?"

"Come, Rosy," cried Mark, "come down to the meadow; there is nothing more to be got out of the old well. Let us leave Brad alone with his book and his fish."

The children turned away towards the meadow,—Rosamond meditating upon the probability of her ever finding the purse and slipper, if she should ever set out in quest of them, and Mark thinking what a fool such a big fellow as Bradford must be, to mind any woman that ever was born.

Bradford took the box and the book to the chestnut-tree, and, stretching himself at full length in the shade, began to turn over the leaves. It was a journal, written in a delicate, graceful hand; and though the paper was somewhat yellow, and the ink faded, the writing was perfectly legible. Bradford looked at it, carelessly reading here and there a sentence, till his eye catching some familiar names, he opened it at the commencement, and read as follows:—

"*December* 31.—It is the last night of the old year. A few more steps, and the old year will have vanished into the great hall of the Past, where all the ages that ever have been are gathered. I have been sitting the last hour by myself, and have fancied that time moved not with its usual swiftness,—that the old year lingered with a sad regret, as if loath to pass away and let the new come in. Even now the midnight clock is striking,—eleven,—twelve;—the last flutter of the old year's robe is out of sight, and the new year glides in with noiseless feet, like one who enters the chamber of the dead. These are but melancholy fancies;—because I am sad myself must I put all the world in mourning? The old year did not linger;—it is only I that am loath to go. I have been so happy here, that the prospect of spending the coming year with Cousin Eleanor fills my mind with sad forebodings;—and yet my childish remembrances of her have in them nothing unpleasant. I think of her as a grave, quiet woman, who never strove to attract and win the love of a child. How I shall miss the life and gayety, the jests and laughter of Madge and Bertha! Madge the more, because she is so full of whims and oddities. To-night she came into my room, and brought this little book for me to write a journal of all that befell me while I was gone, making me promise to write often in it. Not that she ever wished to see it again. Heaven forbid that she should ever be so cruelly punished as to be made to read anybody's journal!—least of all such a stupid one as mine must be, shut up with Cousin Eleanor!—but she thought that I could never draw the book from the case (she had chosen one that fitted very tightly, and would give me much trouble for that very reason) without thinking of her;—and to be thought of often by her friends she confesses she is weak enough to wish.—Dear Madge, I could not forget her, if I would. The book just fits in a little japanned box that belonged to my grandmother, in which she used to keep rouge and pearl-powder. I will keep it in that, and remember my promise to Madge.

"*February* 21.—The journey is over, and I am at Cousin Eleanor's. How the evils that we dread shrink into nothing when we fairly meet them! Cousin

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eleanor received me kindly, and looked neither so grave nor so cold as my memory, assisted by my imagination, had pictured her; and Ashcroft is a pretty place, even in midwinter. I am never tired of sitting at the library-window, and looking at the bare branches of the black ash-trees, as they spread out their network against the winter sky. I have a little desk near the bay-window, where I have my drawing and writing materials, and where I pretend to write and draw, while Eleanor occupies a larger one at the opposite window. Eleanor is a woman of business,—keeps all her accounts, looks after her farm and servants, and manages all her own affairs, and, though a strict and exacting mistress, is neither harsh nor unkind; — she evidently intends to perform all her own duties punctually and faithfully, and expects others to do the same. I often look at her with wonder, her nature is so different from mine,—never impulsive, always cool and steady,—full of ceaseless activity, yet never hurried, and seemingly never perplexed. I sometimes think she sees the whole of her life mapped out before her, and takes up every event in order. With the exception of the servants, we are the only occupants of the house. Eleanor does not seek nor desire the society of her neighbors; and so while she works I dream, read, or answer Madge or Bertha's letters.

"*February* 28.—It has been snowing ceaselessly for two days. I have read, drawn, and sewed till I am as weary as Marianna in the moated grange. I have yawned aloud a dozen times, but Eleanor does not mind it. She has been extremely busy with accounts, papers, and letters. For the last four hours I do not think she has spoken a word. I hear nothing but the scratch of her pen as it moves over the paper, and the wind in the ash-trees. I have taken Madge's journal in despair. Ah, Madge! I wish the bonnie girl were here;—how we would talk nonsense by the hour together, just to keep our tongues in practice, and Madge would hunt down an idea through all its turnings and windings, as if it were a hare, and she a dog in chase of it! A ring at the door;—I hope it may be some human body that will make Cousin Eleanor open her lips at last.

"*March* 1.—The blots on the opposite page show with what haste I shut up my journal yesterday. The ring at the door brought more than I anticipated, and opened my eyes effectually for the rest of the day. 'Mr. Lee,' said the servant, throwing the library-door wide open, and ushering in a man wrapped in a cloak, with a travelling-cap in his hand. Cousin Eleanor rose instantly, and advanced to meet him. I expected to see her extend her hand towards him, and welcome him in her usual courteous manner. Instead of that, she gave him a hearty kiss, which could be heard as well as felt, and which was returned, as I thought, with interest. If the marble Widow Wadman in the library had kissed the sympathizing face of Uncle Toby, I should not have been so much surprised, and should have thought it much more likely to happen.

"'I am very glad to see you, Thornton,' said she. 'I did not think you could come till to-morrow.'

"'I have made the best use of my time,' returned he, 'and had no wish to spend my precious hours at a country inn. It seemed good to see winter and snow again, after so many months of summer.'

"Bending forward to catch a better view of him, as he spoke, the rustling of my dress reminded Eleanor of my presence.

"'My cousin Elizabeth Purcill, Thornton Lee,' said she. 'My two good friends I hope will also be friends to each other.'

"Mr. Lee made me a gentlemanly bow, and said something about the pleasure of seeing me; but more than suspecting that my presence in the library was no pleasure to either of them, I shut up my journal, crowded it into the box, and stole out of the room at the first convenient opportunity. On the stairs I met Mrs. Bickford, the housekeeper.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"'Is any one in the library with Miss Purcill?' asked she.

"'Yes,—a Mr. Lee.'

"'Mr. Lee?' exclaimed she, in surprise. 'I did not know as he was expected home now.'

"'Who is Mr. Lee?'

"'He is the gentleman whom Miss Purcill is to marry; but I thought he was not coming till autumn. I wonder if she knew it.'

"What Eleanor knows she always keeps to herself; none of her household are any the wiser for it. I was more surprised than Mrs. Bickford. Eleanor affianced! I never thought or dreamed of such a thing. Eleanor in love must be a curious spectacle. I did not feel sleepy any longer. What could a woman, so independent, so self-relying, so sufficient for herself, want of a lover? She always seemed to be a whole, and did not need another half to complete herself. I speculated much on the subject, and, when the bell rang for tea, went down-stairs with something of the same feeling of eager curiosity with which I open the pages of a good novel. There is nothing so interesting to idle, observant people as a pair of lovers, provided they are not silly, in which stage they are perfectly unbearable, and never should suffer themselves to be seen even by their intimate friends. Was it my fancy, or not? I thought Eleanor had grown young since I left the library. A soft light beamed in her eyes, and a clear crimson—the first trace of color I had ever seen in her face—burned on her cheek. It was a very different countenance from that at which I had been casting sidelong glances half the day, and yet it seemed to me that she was ashamed of these signs of joy, and thought it but a weakness to feel so glad. I sat silent nearly all the evening;—words always come more readily to my pen than to my lips, and, were it not so, there would have been no occasion for any speech of mine. Their conversation flowed on uninterruptedly, like a full, free river, whose current is strong and deep. How much richer both their lives seemed than mine! He had travelled, thought, seen, and felt so much, and had brought such wealth home with him, fitly coined into aptly chosen words; and she had gathered treasures as priceless from the literature of her own and foreign lands. I had nothing to offer either of them but my ears, and for those I doubt whether they felt grateful,—and when that doubt became a certainty, I crept into the great window in the drawing-room, and looked out upon the lawn. The moon, breaking through the clouds, shone brightly on the new-fallen snow. I sat down on a low chair,—the curtains fell about me,—their voices came to me with a low, dreamy sound,—I leaned my head on my hand, and fell asleep. When I awoke, the fire had died away, and the chairs were empty.

"*March* 20.—Mr. Lee comes every day. His father lives only a few miles from us,—a distance so short as to be no obstacle to a lover with a good horse; though I suspect, if the horse could speak, he would wish the distance either less or greater. These midnight rides must be detrimental to the constitution of any steady horse, and he often wakes me up at night, pawing impatiently under the window while his master is making his lingering adieux on the door-step.

"*April* 1.—I dislike Eleanor more every day. I know not why, unless because I watch her so closely. When Mr. Lee is not here she works as industriously as ever. If I were in love, I would give myself up to a dream or reverie now and then, and build myself an air-castle, if it were only to see it tumble down, and call myself a fool for my pains; but she is too matter-of-fact to do that. Well, if there is not much romance about her love, perhaps there is more reality; yet Thornton Lee is just the man one could make an ideal of, if one only would. But this is not what I especially dislike her for; people must love according to their own nature and temperament, and not after another's pattern. The thing that frets me most just now is the way that Eleanor has of divining my thoughts before they

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are spoken, and even before they are quite clear to myself. Sometimes, when we are talking together, some subject comes up on which I do not care to express my opinion. Eleanor fixes her clear, penetrating eyes upon me, and drags my thought out into the light, just as a kingfisher pounces upon and pulls a fish out of the water. Had I anything to conceal, any secret, I should be afraid of her; and as it is, I do not like this invasion of my personal kingdom,—though my thoughts often acquire new strength and beauty from Eleanor's strong and vigorous language. Last evening, Mr. Lee, Eleanor, and myself were turning over the prints in a large portfolio. We paused at one, the Departure of Hagar into the Wilderness. The artist had represented Hagar turning away from the door of the tent with Ishmael and the bottle of water; Abraham was near her; while Sarah in the background with a triumphant face exulted at the driving out of the bondmaid. The picture had not much merit as a work of Art; but in Hagar's face was such a look of despairing, wistful tenderness, as she turned towards Abraham for the last time, that it moved me almost to tears. I drew a long breath as the picture was turned over. Looking up, I saw Eleanor's eyes fixed upon me.

"'You pity Hagar, then? You think it was a harsh and cruel thing to drive her out into the wilderness with her child?'

"'Yes,' said I, shortly,—a little provoked that she should have seen it in my face.

"She went on: 'Sarah was right. Had I been she, I would have driven her out as remorselessly and as pitilessly. Did she not, presuming upon her youth, her beauty, and her child, despise her mistress? and why should her mistress feel compassion for her? The love of a long life might well thrust aside the passion of a few months, and Sarah, contemned by her bondmaid, is more worthy of pity than Hagar, in my eyes.'

"I was about to say that Sarah was more to blame for Hagar's conduct than she was herself, when Mr. Lee observed 'that Abraham was more to be pitied than either of them, for he was unable or unwilling to protect either of the women whom he loved,—his wife from the contempt of her bondmaid, or the bondmaid from the fury of his wife.'

"I fancied Eleanor did not exactly like this remark, for she turned to the next print hastily and began commenting upon it.

"*May* 6.—The groves and fields are beautiful with the fresh beauty of the early spring. We have given up our winter occupations for long rambles on the hills and in the woods. I sometimes decline being a third in the lovers' walks; but Eleanor seems so dissatisfied, if I refuse to accompany them, that I consent, lagging behind often, and have learned to be both blind and deaf as occasion requires. I think, too, that Mr. Lee is not sorry to have me with them. He and Eleanor have been separated for three years, and I sometimes wonder if they have not grown away from each other in that time. A long absence is a dangerous experiment even for friends, much more for lovers. Besides, no life is long enough to allow such great gaps in it.

"*June* 1.—We were sitting yesterday under the ash-trees on the lawn,—Eleanor netting, Mr. Lee reading Dante aloud, and I making myself rings and bracelets out of the shining blades of grass, and pretending to listen, when a servant brought Eleanor a letter. It was very short, for she did not turn the leaf. When she had read it she drew out her watch.

"'I have an hour before the express-train starts. Tell Mrs. Bickford to pack my trunk for a journey. Harness the black horse to drive to the station.'

"She put the letter into Mr. Lee's hands. 'My brother is very ill, and I shall go to him at once. Elizabeth, I am sorry to leave you here alone, but while I am gone I hope Thornton will consider you under his charge and protection.'

"She rose, as she spoke, and went towards the house, followed by Thornton.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In a few minutes she appeared again, dressed in a gray travelling-dress,—kissed me lightly on the cheek, and bade me good-bye. All her preparations for this long journey had been made without any hurry or confusion, and she did not apparently feel so agitated or nervous at the thought of travelling this distance alone as I should to have gone by myself to the nearest town. Why Thornton did not accompany her, whether he could not or she did not wish it, I do not know; but he parted from her at the station, and soon returned for his horse.

"*July* 1.—Eleanor has been gone a month; in that time we have received but one letter from her. Her brother still lies in a very critical state, and she will not leave him at present. His motherless children, too, she thinks require her care. It seemed very lonesome at first without her. I did not think I could have missed an uncongenial person, one with whom I had so little sympathy, so much. I think I must belong to the tribe of creeping plants, which cling to whatever is nearest to them. Ashcroft grows daily more beautiful, and Thornton comes often to see me. We read together books that I like, (not Dante,) walk and sketch. We are on excellent terms, and call each other Cousin in view of our future relationship. I can talk more freely to him, now that Eleanor is not here,—and feel no disposition to hide my thoughts, now that I can keep them to myself, if I choose.

"*July* 24.—A week ago, one fair midsummer afternoon, we strolled to the knoll, and sat down under the blossoming boughs of the chestnut-tree.

"'I think,' said I, 'this is the pleasantest place in all the grounds; but Eleanor never seemed willing to come here.'

"'Eleanor has many unpleasant remembrances connected with the place,' replied Thornton. 'Her father's obstinate persistence in digging the well was a great annoyance to the whole household, and, unimaginative as Eleanor is, I fancy sometimes, from her avoidance of the spot, that she has some superstitious idea connected with the well,—that she fears through it some great misfortune may happen to some of the family.'

"'I hardly see how that can be,' said I, rising and going to the brink of the well; 'it is very deep, but there was never any water in it.'

"Just then I caught sight of a little flower growing out of the cleft of one of the stones. I knelt down and bent over to reach it. I slipped, I know not how, and should have fallen, had not Thornton sprung to my side and caught me.

"'Ah, my foolish cousin!' said he, 'there needs not to be water in the well to make it a dangerous place. Promise me that you will not attempt such a thing again.'

"'Not I,' said I, laughing gayly to conceal my fright,—for I did think I was about to break my neck on the stones below. 'There is no harm done, and I have got what I was after,'—and I held up the flower.

"It was an ugly little thing, and looked not half so pretty in my hand as it did in the shadow of the well. I would not have gathered it, had I seen it growing by the roadside. 'Is it not pretty?'

"'Humph!' said he, 'very!—worth breaking one's neck for!'

"'I was about to offer it to you, but, since you despise it, I will keep it myself,' —and I stuck it into my hair.

"Some time after, I missed the flower. I did not see it on the grass, but a leaf strangely similar peeped out of Thornton's waistcoat-pocket. When we passed by the well, on leaving the knoll, 'Promise me,' said he again, 'that you will not reach over the well for flowers any more.'

"I was a little irritated at his pertinacity. 'I shall do no such thing,' returned I; 'you are growing as superstitious as Eleanor. On the contrary, I think I shall make a garden there and tend it every day; and whenever I go away from Ashcroft, I will leave something on the stone for you, to show how idle your fears are.'

"Thornton did not answer. He was provoked, but showed his anger only by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his silence. We sauntered back to the house in a different mood from that in which we had left it.

"*August* 4.—Thornton came into the library to-day with a letter from Eleanor. She cannot leave her brother, and wrote to Thornton about some papers that she wished sent to her without delay. They were in the drawer of the desk at which I was sitting. Thornton said he was in haste, as he wished to prepare the packet for the next mail. I rose at once. In his hurry he knocked the little japanned box on to the floor. Begging pardon for his awkwardness, he picked it up, and looked at it a moment to assure himself that it had suffered no damage.

"'It is a curious little thing,' said he, 'and looks as if it were a hundred years old.'

"'It belonged once to my grandmother, and held pearl-powder and rouge,' said I.

"'And is used for the same purpose now?' inquired he.

"'Yes,' returned I, my cheek reddening a little. 'I was just putting some on as you entered.'

"'It must be very uncommon rouge,' remarked he, quietly fixing his eyes on me; 'it grows red after it is put on, and must require much care in the use of it.'

"'I thought you were in a great hurry, Thornton, when you came in.'

"'And so I am';—and he began undoing and separating papers, but every few moments he would steal a glance—a glance that made me feel uneasy—towards me, as I sat at the other window busying myself with my needle.

"*August* 25.—I wish Eleanor would come home. I sometimes think I will go away; but to leave Ashcroft now would imply a doubt of Thornton's honor, and impute thoughts to him which perhaps have no existence but in my vanity.

"*October* 3.—Ah, why was I so foolish? Why did I not go when I saw the danger so clearly, instead of cheating myself into the belief that there was none? Would that I had never come to Ashcroft, or had had the courage to leave it! These last six weeks, I do not know, I cannot tell, how they have been spent. Thornton was ever by my side, and I—did not wish him away. We sat this afternoon on the lawn under the great ash-tree,—the one under which he sat reading Dante to Eleanor the last day she was with us. The love which had burned in his eyes all day found utterance at last, and flamed out in fiery, passionate words. He drew me towards him. His vehemence frightened me, and I muttered something about Eleanor. It checked him for a moment, but, quickly recovering, he spoke freely of himself and of her,—of the love which had existed between them,—a feeling so feeble and so poor, compared to that which he felt for me, as to be unworthy of the name. He entreated, he implored my love. I was silent. He bent over me, gazing into my face. There was a traitor lurking in my heart, which looked out of my eyes, and spoke without my consent. He understood that language but too well. I bent my eyes upon the ground,—his arm was around my waist, his hand clasped mine, his lips approached my cheek. A shadow seemed suddenly to come between me and the sun. I looked up and saw Eleanor, clad in mourning, standing before us. I started at once to my feet, and, like the coward that I am, fled and left them together. I ran down to the old hawthorn-tree, against which I leaned, panting and trembling. Yet, in a few moments, ashamed of my weakness, I stole back to where I could see them unobserved. Eleanor stood upon the same spot, calm and motionless. Thornton was speaking, but I was too far off to hear more than the sound of his voice. When he had ended, he approached her, as if to bid her adieu; but she passed him with a stately bow, and entered the hall-door. Thornton took his way to the stables, and I soon heard the clattering of his horse's hoofs on the hard gravelled road. When the sound died away in the distance, I stole into the house and crept up to my chamber. How long I was there I could not tell; but when I heard the bell ring for tea, I washed my face and smoothed my hair.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I would not be so cowardly as to fear to see Eleanor again, and perhaps it would be better for us both to meet in the presence of a third person.

"Mrs. Bickford was alone at the table. 'Miss Purcill would not come down to-night,—she was fatigued with her journey.'

"The good lady strove to entertain me with her conversation, but, finding that I neither heard, answered, nor ate, our meal was soon brought to a close. It is long past midnight. I have thought till I am sick and giddy with thinking. I cannot sleep, and have been writing here to control the wildness of my imaginings. I have been twice to Eleanor's chamber. The door is half ground-glass, and I can see her black shadow as she walks to and fro across the room. She has been walking so ever since she entered it.

"*October* 4. — What shall I do? Where shall I go? All night and all day Eleanor has walked her chamber-floor. I have been to the door. I have knocked. I have called her by name. I have turned the handle,—the door is locked. No answer comes to me,—nothing but the black shadow flitting across the panes. I sat down by the threshold and burst into tears.

"Mrs. Bickford found me there. 'Do not grieve so, Miss Elizabeth,' said she, kindly. 'It is dreadful, I know; but Miss Purcill walked the floor all night after her father died, and would admit no one to her room. She will be better to-morrow.'

"I shook my head. Could I believe that grief for the dead, and not sorrow for the conduct of the living, moved her thus, I should be happy. Then I could offer consolation and sympathy; but now, if I saw her, what could I say? Pity, sorrow for her grief, would be but idle words, which she would spurn with contempt,—and she would be right. There is but one thing left for me,—I must go from Ashcroft; then, perhaps, she and Thornton——But no, it cannot be; so wide asunder, they cannot come together again. And do I wish it? Is not his love as much mine now as it ever was hers? Ah, how some words once spoken cannot be forgotten! Before me now is the little picture of Hagar, which Eleanor had framed and hung in the library. Did she place it before my eyes as a warning to me? In Hagar's fate I see my own; for even now I hear Eleanor asking if the passion of a few hours is to thrust aside the love of long years. The boudmaid will go ere she is driven out. But Thornton—I cannot, will not, see him again. He has written to me to-day, saying that he cannot come here, and asking me to meet him at the well to-morrow. By that time I shall be far on my way to Madge. He will wait for me, and I shall not come. How can I leave him thus? He will believe me heartless and cruel. I grieve even now for his pain and grief. He will think that I did not love, but only sported with him. How dearly I love him words cannot tell; and I go that his way may be smoother, and that in my absence he may find—peace at last. A little dried flower lies on the page that I turned. It is one of those that grew in the well, that I wore on my bosom one day, that he might see and know it, and chide me for having been there again. His chiding was sweeter to me than others' praise. I will not be so unjust to myself. I will not go without one word. I jestingly told him once I would leave a token for him on the stone in the well when I went away from Ashcroft. I will put my journal there. He will see the box and remember it. He will learn that I have gone, and will know that I love, but that I leave and renounce him."

The remaining pages of the book were blank. Elizabeth Purcill's journal was ended. Bradford was busy with conjectures. Why had not Thornton found and kept the journal intended for him? Had it fallen at once to the bottom of the well, and lain there for years, while he waited in vain for her coming or her token? Her departure had not brought Eleanor Purcill and Thornton Lee together; for his aunt still remained un-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wedded, and he came every Sunday to the village church, with a sweet matronly-faced woman on his arm, and two children by his side.

Bradford thrust the journal into his pocket, took up his fishing-rod and basket, and sauntered towards the village. He thought he remembered the name of Elizabeth Purcill on a head-stone in the church-yard. He opened the little wicket and went in. The setting sun threw the long shadows of the head-stones across the thick, rank grass. The sounds of the village children at play on the green came to his ear softened and mellowed by the distance.

He turned towards the spot where, year after year, the Purcills had been gathered,—those who had died in their beds in their native town, and those who had perished in far-off climes, and whose bones had been brought to moulder by the old church-wall. He found the stone, and, bending down, read, "Elizabeth Purcill, died Oct. 5th, 18—, aged 19." Bradford opened the journal and looked at the last date. She had died, then, the day after the journal was ended. But how, and where?

He sat down on the flat stone which covered his grandfather, and turned over the pages again, as if they could tell him more than he already knew. So absorbed was he, that he did not see a woman who a few minutes afterwards knelt down before the same stone, and with a sickle began to cut away the weeds and grass.

Bradford looked up at last, and, as the woman raised her head for an instant, saw that it was Mrs. Bickford. He approached her and called her by name. She gave a little start, as she heard his voice.

"Why, Master Bradford, who would have thought of seeing you here at this time?"

Bradford smiled. "Whose grave is this that you are taking such pains to clear?"

She pointed to the name with her sickle.

"Yes, I know all that that can tell me. But who was Elizabeth Purcill?—what relation was she to me?—and how came she to die so young, and to be buried here?"

"Why do you think I should know?" she replied. "People often die young; and no matter where the Purcills die, they all wish to come here at last;—that one died in Cuba,—that in France,—that in Greece,—and that at sea." And she turned her hand towards them, as she spoke.

"But you do not care for their graves; look, how the grass and weeds nod over that tombstone; and you would not clear this, unless you knew something about the girl that lies underneath it."

"It is an old story," said she, with a sigh, "and I can tell you but little of it."

She laid her sickle down on the cut grass and sat down by it.

"Elizabeth Purcill was the daughter of your grandfather's brother, and therefore your father's cousin. Long as I have lived in the family, I never saw him; for he went to India, while a young man, to seek a fortune, which was found too late to benefit either himself or his children. Elizabeth, his eldest daughter, was sent home for her education, and lived first with one of her kinsfolk, and then another, as her father's whims or their convenience dictated. You remember, though so young, when your Aunt Eleanor came to your father's house on her way to your Uncle Erasmus in his last illness?"

Bradford nodded.

"A little before that time Elizabeth Purcill came to Ashcroft. She was a pretty, lively girl, and it was pleasant to see in our sober household one who had time to be idle and could laugh. Your Aunt Eleanor was always a busy woman,—busier then than she is now,—and had no time for mirth. Every servant in the house liked Miss Elizabeth for her sunny smile and her pleasant ways. Shortly afterwards, Thornton Lee came home. He had been three years in Africa, and he and your aunt were to be married in the autumn.

"When Miss Purcill went away, Mr. Lee remained, and came often to see

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Miss Elizabeth. She had a winsome face, that few men could look upon and not love; and I sometimes thought, when I saw them together, how much better she was suited to Mr. Lee than your Aunt Eleanor, and wondered if he had not found it out himself. Your aunt was away a long time, and, by some mistake, the letter, saying that she was coming home, did not reach us till the day after her arrival.

"It was a beautiful October afternoon. I had been gathering the grapes that grew on the garden wall, and was carrying a basket of them to Miss Elizabeth, whom I had seen, half an hour before, with Mr. Lee, on the lawn. As I was crossing the hall, Miss Purcill, dressed in deep mourning, looking ghastly pale, entered the front door. I started as if I had seen a ghost, and dropped my basket. Miss Eleanor passed me quickly and went up-stairs. I spoke to her. She did not answer, but, entering her chamber, fastened the door behind her.

"I looked out of the window. No one was on the lawn; but presently I saw Mr. Lee coming out of the stable, leading his horse. He mounted and was out of sight in an instant. Miss Elizabeth was nowhere to be seen. What had happened I could not tell. I could only guess.

"Miss Elizabeth was the only one who came to tea, and her eyes were heavy and dull, and she seemed like one in a dream. That night was a wretched one to both. When I went to the library to see if the windows were fastened for the night, Miss Elizabeth sat by the smouldering fire with her face buried in her hands. I shut the door softly and left her, and till I slept I heard Miss Eleanor's steps across her chamber-floor.

"The day was no better than the night. Miss Purcill did not leave her room, and her cousin wandered about the house, as if her thoughts would not let her rest. Once I found her in tears at your aunt's door, and tried to console her; but she shook her head impatiently, as if I could not understand the cause of her grief.

"The next morning, while I was dressing, my niece Sally came to me in great haste, saying that Roger, the gardener, wished to see me at once. I hurried on my clothes and went down. I knew by the man's face that something dreadful had happened; but when he told me that he had been to the old well, and had found Miss Elizabeth lying dead at the bottom of it, I felt as if I was stunned.

"I roused myself at last. I ran to Miss Purcill's door. I shook it violently and called her by name. She came and opened the door in her night-dress. Somehow, I know not and cared not how, for it seemed to me that she had something to do with all this, I told her that her Cousin Elizabeth was lying dead at the bottom of the old well. She staggered and leaned against the door like one who had received a heavy blow. For a moment I repented my roughness. But she was soon herself again. She thrust her feet into her slippers, and, wrapping her dressing-gown about her, went down-stairs, and gave directions, as calmly and collectedly as if she were (Heaven help her!) ordering a dinner for the men — to bring the body home. Ah, me! I never shall forget how the poor thing looked when the four men who bore the litter set it down on the library-floor. A bruise on the temple showed where she had struck on the cruel stones. The hoarfrost, which had turned into drops of dew, glittered among her soft brown curls."

The tears which had been gathering in Mrs. Bickford's eyes fell in large drops into her lap as she went on.

"On the day of the funeral, she lay in the library, still and cold in her coffin. I had gathered a few flowers, with which I was vainly trying to cheat death into looking more like life, by placing them on her bosom and in her stiffened fingers. Miss Eleanor sat at the foot of the coffin, almost as motionless as the form within it. I had finished my task and turned away, when the door opened and Mr. Lee came in silently. A slight shudder went through him, as he came to the coffin and bent over it. What a change had three days made in the man! Ten years would not

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have taken so much youth and life from him and made him look so old and wan. He looked upon her as a man who looks his last upon what he loved best in the world;—his whole soul was in his eyes.

"I think he did not see Miss Eleanor till he was about to leave the room. She had not spoken, and he was unconscious of her presence. He turned towards her and held out his hand; his lips moved, but no words escaped them. I heard Miss Purcill's low, unfaltering answer to his unspoken thoughts. She did not take his proffered hand, but said, 'Nothing can unite us again, Thornton,—not even death.'

"His hand dropped by his side;—he quickly left the room, and never came to Ashcroft again. When I went to take a last look of Miss Elizabeth, I saw that the white rose which I had placed in her hand was gone;—he had taken it."

Mrs. Bickford paused. Her story was ended. In a few minutes she took up her sickle again, and Bradford stood leaning against the head-stone till the grass was all cut on the grave. He had no more questions to ask,—for the journal had told him more of the dead below, than Mrs. Bickford, with all her love and sympathy, could do. She had fallen into the well, then, while endeavoring to place the box on the stone. When Mrs. Bickford's task was done, she walked silently back to Ashcroft with Bradford.

Late in the evening he was alone in the library with his Aunt Eleanor. The picture of Hagar, now so full of interest to him, still hung on the wall, and the little desk was at the window which looked out upon the lawn. Should he show the journal to his aunt, or keep it to himself? Would Elizabeth Purcill wish her Cousin Eleanor to read her written words as she once read her untold thoughts?

Wrapped up in his own musings, he started suddenly when Miss Purcill said to him, "Rosamond tells me that you found a book to-day in the old well; what was it?"—and answered promptly, "It was Elizabeth Purcill's journal."

It was the first time Eleanor had heard the name for years. She showed no signs of emotion. "I should like to see it," said she; "give it to me."

Bradford had been brought up in such habits of obedience, that he never thought of disputing his aunt's command. He drew the journal from his pocket and handed it to her without speaking.

"You have read it?" said she, fixing her keen eyes upon him.

"Yes."

She drew the lamp towards her and opened the book. The shade on the lamp kept the light from her face; but had Bradford seen it, it would have told him no more of the thoughts beneath it than the stone in the churchyard had told him of Elizabeth Purcill.

He watched her turning over the leaves slowly, and thought that her hand trembled a little at the close. Those pages must have stirred many a memory and many a grief, as the wind shakes the bare boughs of the trees, though blossom, fruit, and leaves have long since fallen.

She closed the book, and spoke at last:—"I think, Bradford, this book belongs rightfully but to one person,—Mr. Thornton Lee. Shall I send it to him?"

Eleanor's question was uttered in a tone that seemed to admit of but one reply. Bradford assented. If he might not keep the journal himself, he would rather Thornton Lee should have it than his aunt.

The next day, Thornton Lee received a small packet, accompanied by a note which ran thus:—

"To do justice to the memory of one who, years ago, came between us, I send you this little book, found in the old well yesterday. From it you will learn how she came by her death, and—how much she loved you. ELEANOR PURCILL."

As Thornton Lee read the journal, his children climbed his knee and twined his gray curls around their fingers, and his wife came and leaned sportively over his shoulder and looked at the yellow leaves.

In some lives, as in some years, there is an after-summer; but in others, the hoar-frosts are succeeded by the winter snow.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE DEAD HOUSE.

HERE once my step was quickened,
  Here beckoned the opening door,
And welcome thrilled from the threshold
  To the foot it had felt before.

A glow came forth to meet me
  From the flame that laughed in the grate,
And shadows a-dance on the ceiling
  Danced blither with mine for a mate.

"I claim you, old friend," yawned the arm-chair,—
  "This corner, you know, is your seat."
"Rest your slippers on me," beamed the fender,—
  "I brighten at touch of your feet."

"We know the practised finger,"
  Said the books, "that seems like brain";
And the shy page rustled the secret
  It had kept till I came again.

Sang the pillow, "My down once quivered
  On nightingales' throats that flew
Through moonlit gardens of Hafiz
  To gather quaint dreams for you."

Ah, me, where the Past sowed heart's-ease,
  The Present plucks rue for us men!
I come back: that scar unhealing
  Was not in the churchyard then.

But, I think, the house is unaltered;
  I will go and beg to look
At the rooms that were once familiar
  To my life as its bed to a brook.

Unaltered! Alas for the sameness
  That makes the change but more!
'Tis a dead man I see in the mirrors,
  'Tis his tread that chills the floor!

To learn such a simple lesson
  Need I go to Paris and Rome,—
That the many make a household,
  But only one the home?

'Twas just a womanly presence,
  An influence unexprest,—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But a rose she had worn on my grave-sod
  Were more than long life with the rest!

'Twas a smile, 'twas a garment's rustle,
  'Twas nothing that I can phrase,—
But the whole dumb dwelling grew conscious,
  And put on her looks and ways.

Were it mine, I would close the shutters,
  Like lids when the life is fled,
And the funeral fire should wind it,
  This corpse of a home that is dead.

For it died that autumn morning
  When she, its soul, was borne
To lie all dark on the hillside
  That looks over woodland and corn.

THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST-TABLE.

EVERY MAN HIS OWN BOSWELL.

[I DID not think it probable that I should have a great many more talks with our company, and therefore I was anxious to get as much as I could into every conversation. That is the reason why you will find some odd, miscellaneous facts here, which I wished to tell at least once, as I should not have a chance to tell them habitually, at our breakfast-table.—We're very free and easy, you know; we don't read what we don't like. Our parish is so large, one can't pretend to preach to all the pews at once. Besides, one can't be all the time trying to do the best of one's best; if a company works a steam fire-engine, the firemen needn't be straining themselves all day to squirt over the top of the flagstaff. Let them wash some of those lower-story windows a little. Besides, there is no use in our quarrelling now, as you will find out when you get through this paper.]

——Travel, according to my experience, does not exactly correspond to the idea one gets of it out of most books of travels. I am thinking of travel as it was when I made the Grand Tour, especially in Italy. Memory is a net; one finds it full of fish when he takes it from the brook; but a dozen miles of water have run through it without sticking. I can prove some facts about travelling by a story or two. There are certain principles to be assumed,—such as these:—He who is carried by horses must deal with rogues.—To-day's dinner subtends a larger visual angle than yesterday's revolution. A mote in my eye is bigger to me than the biggest of Dr. Gould's private planets.—Every traveller is a self-taught entomologist.—Old jokes are dynamometers of mental tension; an old joke tells better among friends travelling than at home,—which shows that their minds are in a state of diminished, rather than increased vitality. There was a story about "strahps to your pahnts," which was vastly funny to us fellows—on the road from Milan to Venice.—*Cœlum, non animum,*—travellers change their guineas, but not their characters. The

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bore is the same, eating dates under the cedars of Lebanon, as over a plate of baked beans in Beacon Street.—Parties of travellers have a morbid instinct for "establishing raws" upon each other.—A man shall sit down with his friend at the foot of the Great Pyramid and they will take up the question they had been talking about under "the great elm," and forget all about Egypt. When I was crossing the Po, we were all fighting about the propriety of one fellow's telling another that his argument was *absurd;* one maintaining it to be a perfectly admissible logical term, as proved by the phrase, "reductio ad absurdum"; the rest badgering him as a conversational bully. Mighty little we troubled ourselves for *Padus*, the Po, "a river broader and more rapid than the Rhone," and the times when Hannibal led his grim Africans to its banks, and his elephants thrust their trunks into the yellow waters over which that pendulum ferry-boat was swinging back and forward every ten minutes!

——Here are some of those reminiscences, with morals prefixed, or annexed, or implied.

Lively emotions very commonly do not strike us full in front, but obliquely from the side; a scene or incident in *undress* often affects more than one in full costume.

"Is this the mighty ocean?—is this all?"

says the Princess in Gebir. The rush that should have flooded my soul in the Coliseum did not come. But walking one day in the fields about the city, I stumbled over a fragment of broken masonry, and lo! the World's Mistress in her stone girdle—*alta mœnia Romæ*—rose before me and whitened my cheek with her pale shadow as never before or since.

I used very often, when coming home from my morning's work at one of the public institutions of Paris, to stop in at the dear old church of St. Etienne du Mont. The tomb of St. Genevieve, surrounded by burning candles and votive tablets, was there; the mural tablet of Jacobus Benignus Winslow was there; there was a noble organ with carved figures; the pulpit was borne on the oaken shoulders of a stooping Samson; and there was a marvellous staircase like a coil of lace. These things I mention from memory, but not all of them together impressed me so much as an inscription on a small slab of marble fixed in one of the walls. It told how this church of St. Stephen was repaired and beautified in the year 16**, and how, during the celebration of its reopening, two girls of the parish (*filles de la paroisse*) fell from the gallery, carrying a part of the balustrade with them, to the pavement, but by a miracle escaped uninjured. Two young girls, nameless, but real presences to my imagination, as much as when they came fluttering down on the tiles with a cry that outscreamed the sharpest treble in the Te Deum! (Look at Carlyle's article on Boswell, and see how he speaks of the poor young woman Johnson talked with in the streets one evening.) All the crowd gone but these two "filles de la paroisse,"—gone as utterly as the dresses they wore, as the shoes that were on their feet, as the bread and meat that were in the market on that day.

Not the great historical events, but the personal incidents that call up single sharp pictures of some human being in its pang or struggle, reach us most nearly. I remember the platform at Berne, over the parapet of which Theobald Weinzäpfli's restive horse sprung with him and landed him more than a hundred feet beneath in the lower town, not dead, but sorely broken, and no longer a wild youth, but God's servant from that day forward. I have forgotten the famous bears, and all else.—I remember the Percy lion on the bridge over the little river at Alnwick,—the leaden lion with his tail stretched out straight like a pump-handle,—and why? Because of the story of the village boy who must fain bestride the leaden tail, standing out over the water,—which breaking, he dropped into the stream far below, and was taken out an idiot for the rest of his life.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Arrow-heads must be brought to a sharp point, and the guillotine-axe must have a slanting edge. Something intensely human, narrow, and definite pierces to the seat of our sensibilities more readily than huge occurrences and catastrophes. A nail will pick a lock that defies hatchet and hammer. "The Royal George" went down with all her crew, and Cowper wrote an exquisitely simple poem about it; but the leaf that holds it is smooth, while that which bears the lines on his mother's portrait is blistered with tears.

My telling these recollections sets me thinking of others of the same kind that strike the imagination, especially when one is still young. You remember the monument in Devizes market to the woman struck dead with a lie in her mouth. I never saw that, but it is in the books. Here is one I never heard mentioned;—if any of the "Note and Query" tribe can tell the story, I hope they will. Where is this monument? I was riding on an English stage-coach when we passed a handsome marble column (as I remember it) of considerable size and pretensions.—What is that?—I said.—That,—answered the coachman,—is *the hangman's pillar*. Then he told me how a man went out one night, many years ago, to steal sheep. He caught one, tied its legs together, passed the rope over his head, and started for home. In climbing a fence, the rope slipped, caught him by the neck, and strangled him. Next morning he was found hanging dead on one side of the fence and the sheep on the other; in memory whereof the lord of the manor caused this monument to be erected as a warning to all who love mutton better than virtue. I will send a copy of this record to him or her who shall first set me right about this column and its locality.

And telling over these old stories reminds me that I have something that may interest architects and perhaps some other persons. I once ascended the spire of Strasburg Cathedral, which is the highest, I think, in Europe. It is a shaft of stone filigree-work, frightfully open, so that the guide puts his arms behind you to keep you from falling. To climb it is a noonday nightmare, and to think of having climbed it crisps all the fifty-six joints of one's twenty digits. While I was on it, "pinnacled dim in the intense inane," a strong wind was blowing, and I felt sure that the spire was rocking. It swayed back and forward like a stalk of rye or a cat-o'nine-tails (bulrush) with a bobolink on it. I mentioned it to the guide, and he said that the spire did really swing back and forward,—I think he said some feet.

Keep any line of knowledge ten years and some other line will intersect it. Long afterwards I was hunting out a paper of Dumeril's in an old journal,—the "Magazin Encyclopédique" for *l'an troisième*, (1795,) when I stumbled upon a brief article on the vibrations of the spire of Strasburg Cathedral. A man can shake it so that the movement shall be shown in a vessel of water nearly seventy feet below the summit, and higher up the vibration is like that of an earthquake. I have seen one of those wretched wooden spires with which we very shabbily finish some of our stone churches (thinking that the lidless blue eye of heaven cannot tell the counterfeit we try to pass on it) swinging like a reed, in a wind, but one would hardly think of such a thing's happening in a stone spire. Does the Bunker-Hill Monument bend in the blast like a blade of grass? I suppose so.

You see, of course, that I am talking in a cheap way;—perhaps we will have some philosophy by and by;—let me work out this thin mechanical vein.—I have something more to say about trees. I have brought down this slice of hemlock to show you. Tree blew down in my woods (that were) in 1852. Twelve feet and a half round, fair girth;—nine feet, where I got my section, higher up. This is a wedge, going to the centre, of the general shape of a slice of apple-pie in a large and not opulent family. Length, about eighteen inches. I have

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

studied the growth of this tree by its rings, and it is curious. Three hundred and forty-two rings. Started, therefore, about 1510. The thickness of the rings tells the rate at which it grew. For five or six years the rate was slow, — then rapid for twenty years. A little before the year 1550 it began to grow very slowly, and so continued for about seventy years. In 1620 it took a new start and grew fast until 1714; then for the most part slowly until 1786, when it started again and grew pretty well and uniformly until within the last dozen years, when it seems to have got on sluggishly.

Look here. Here are some human lives laid down against the periods of its growth, to which they corresponded. This is Shakspeare's. The tree was seven inches in diameter when he was born; ten inches when he died. A little less than ten inches when Milton was born; seventeen when he died. Then comes a long interval, and this thread marks out Johnson's life, during which the tree increased from twenty-two to twenty-nine inches in diameter. Here is the span of Napoleon's career;—the tree doesn't seem to have minded it.

I never saw the man yet who was not startled at looking on this section. I have seen many wooden preachers,—never one like this. How much more striking would be the calendar counted on the rings of one of those awful trees which were standing when Christ was on earth, and where that brief mortal life is chronicled with the stolid apathy of vegetable being, which remembers all human history as a thing of yesterday in its own dateless existence!

I have something more to say about elms. A relative tells me there is one of great glory in Andover, near Bradford. I have some recollections of the former place, pleasant and other. [I wonder if the old Seminary clock strikes as slowly as it used to. My room-mate thought, when he first came, it was the bell tolling deaths, and people's ages, as they do in the country. He swore—(ministers' sons get so familiar with good words that they are apt to handle them carelessly)—that the children were dying by the dozen, of all ages, from one to twelve, and ran off next day in recess, when it began to strike eleven, but was caught before the clock got through striking.] At the foot of "the hill," down in town, is, or was, a tidy old elm, which was said to have been hooped with iron to protect it from Indian tomahawks, (*Credat Hahnemannus*,) and to have grown round its hoops and buried them in its wood. Of course, this is not the tree my relative means.

Also, I have a very pretty letter from Norwich, in Connecticut, telling me of two noble elms which are to be seen in that town. One hundred and twenty-seven feet from bough-end to bough-end! What do you say to that? And gentle ladies beneath it, that love it and celebrate its praises! And that in a town of such supreme, audacious, Alpine loveliness as Norwich!—Only the dear people there must learn to call it Norridge, and not be misled by the mere accident of spelling.

Nor*wich*.
Por*ch*mouth.
Cincinnat*ah*.

What a sad picture of our civilization!

I did not speak to you of the great tree on what used to be the Colman farm, in Deerfield, simply because I had not seen it for many years, and did not like to trust my recollection. But I had it in memory, and even noted down, as one of the finest trees in symmetry and beauty I had ever seen. I have received a document, signed by two citizens of a neighboring town, certified by the postmaster and a selectman, and these again corroborated, reinforced, and sworn to by a member of that extraordinary college-class to which it is the good fortune of my friend the Professor to belong, who, though he has *formerly* been a member of Congress, is, I believe, fully worthy of confidence. The tree "girts" eighteen and a half feet, and spreads over a hundred, and is a real beauty. I hope

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to meet my friend under its branches yet; if we don't have "youth at the prow," we will have "pleasure at the 'elm."

And just now, again, I have got a letter about some grand willows in Maine, and another about an elm in Wayland, but too late for anything but thanks.

[And this leads me to say, that I have received a great many communications, in prose and verse, since I began printing these notes. The last came this very morning, in the shape of a neat and brief poem, from New Orleans. I could not make any of them public, though sometimes requested to do so. Some of them have given me great pleasure, and encouraged me to believe I had friends whose faces I had never seen. If you are pleased with anything a writer says, and doubt whether to tell him of it, do not hesitate; a pleasant word is a cordial to one, who perhaps thinks he is tiring you, and so becomes tired himself. I purr very loud over a good, honest letter that says pretty things to me.]

——Sometimes very young persons send communications, which they want forwarded to editors; and these young persons do not always seem to have right conceptions of these same editors, and of the public, and of themselves. Here is a letter I wrote to one of these young folks, but, on the whole, thought it best not to send. It is not fair to single out one for such sharp advice, where there are hundreds that are in need of it.

Dear Sir,—You seem to be somewhat, but not a great deal, wiser than I was at your age. I don't wish to be understood as saying too much, for I think, without committing myself to any opinion on my present state, that I was not a Solomon at that stage of development.

You long to "leap at a single bound into celebrity." Nothing is so commonplace as to wish to be remarkable. Fame usually comes to those who are thinking about something else,—very rarely to those who say to themselves, "Go to, now, let us be a celebrated individual!" The struggle for fame, as such, commonly ends in notoriety;—that ladder is easy to climb, but it leads to the pillory which is crowded with fools who could not hold their tongues and rogues who could not hide their tricks.

If you have the consciousness of genius, do something to show it. The world is pretty quick, nowadays, to catch the flavor of true originality; if you write anything remarkable, the magazines and newspapers will find you out, as the school-boys find out where the ripe apples and pears are. Produce anything really good, and an intelligent editor will jump at it. Don't flatter yourself that any article of yours is rejected because you are unknown to fame. Nothing pleases an editor more than to get anything worth having from a new hand. There is always a dearth of really fine articles for a first-rate journal; for, of a hundred pieces received, ninety are at or below the sea-level; some have water enough, but no head; some head enough, but no water; only two or three are from full reservoirs, high up that hill which is so hard to climb.

You may have genius. The contrary is of course probable, but it is not demonstrated. If you have, the world wants you more than you want it. It has not only a desire, but a passion, for every spark of genius that shows itself among us; there is not a bull-calf in our national pasture that can bleat a rhyme but it is ten to one, among his friends and no takers, that he is the real, genuine, no-mistake Osiris.

Qu'est ce qu'il a fait? What has he done? That was Napoleon's test. What have you done? Turn up the faces of your picture-cards, my boy! You need not make mouths at the public because it has not accepted you at your own fancy-valuation. Do the prettiest thing you can and wait your time.

For the verses you send me, I will not say they are hopeless, and I dare not affirm that they show promise. I am not an editor, but I know the standard of some editors. You must not expect to "leap with a single bound" into the so-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ciety of those whom it is not flattery to call your betters. When "The Paetolian" has paid you for a copy of verses,—(I can furnish you a list of alliterative signatures, beginning with Annie Aureole and ending with Zoë Zenith,)—when "The Rag-bag" has stolen your piece, after carefully scratching your name out,—when "The Nut-cracker" has thought you worth shelling, and strung the kernel of your cleverest poem,—then, and not till then, you may consider the presumption against you, from the fact of your rhyming tendency, as called in question, and let our friends hear from you, if you think it worth while. You may possibly think me too candid, and even accuse me of incivility; but let me assure you that I am not half so plain-spoken as Nature, nor half so rude as Time. If you prefer the long jolting of public opinion to the gentle touch of friendship, try it like a man. Only remember this,—that, if a bushel of potatoes is shaken in a market-cart without springs to it, the small potatoes always get to the bottom.

Believe me, etc., etc.

I always think of verse-writers, when I am in this vein; for these are by far the most exacting, eager, self-weighing, restless, querulous, unreasonable literary persons one is like to meet with. Is a young man in the habit of writing verses? Then the presumption is that he is an inferior person. For, look you, there are at least nine chances in ten that he writes *poor* verses. Now the habit of chewing on rhymes without sense and soul to match them is, like that of using any other narcotic, at once a proof of feebleness and a debilitating agent. A young man can get rid of the presumption against him afforded by his writing verses only by convincing us that they are verses worth writing.

All this sounds hard and rough, but, observe, it is not addressed to any individual, and of course does not refer to any reader of these pages. I would always treat any given young person passing through the meteoric showers which rain down on the brief period of adolescence with great tenderness. God forgive us, if we ever speak harshly to young creatures on the strength of these ugly truths, and so, sooner or later, smite some tender-souled poet or poetess on the lips who might have sung the world into sweet trances, had we not silenced the matin-song in its first low breathings! Just as my heart yearns over the unloved, just so it sorrows for the ungifted who are doomed to the pangs of an undeceived self-estimate. I have always tried to be gentle with the most hopeless cases. My experience, however, has not been encouraging.

——X. Y., æt. 18, a cheaply-got-up youth, with narrow jaws, and broad, bony, cold, red hands, having been laughed at by the girls in his village, and "got the mitten" (pronounced mitt*in*) two or three times, falls to souling and controlling, and youthing and truthing, in the newspapers. Sends me some strings of verses, candidates for the Orthopedic Infirmary, all of them, in which I learn for the millionth time one of the following facts: either that something about a chime is sublime, or that something about time is sublime, or that something about a chime is concerned with time, or that something about a rhyme is sublime or concerned with time or with a chime. Wishes my opinion of the same, with advice as to his future course.

What shall I do about it? Tell him the whole truth, and send him a ticket of admission to the Institution for Idiots and Feeble-minded Youth? One doesn't like to be cruel,—and yet one hates to lie. Therefore one softens down the ugly central fact of donkeyism,—recommends study of good models,—that writing verse should be an incidental occupation only, not interfering with the hoe, the needle, the lapstone, or the ledger,—and, above all, that there should be no hurry in printing what is written. Not the least use in all this. The poetaster who has tasted type is done for. He is like the man who has once been a candidate for the Presidency. He feeds on

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the madder of his delusion all his days, and his very bones grow red with the glow of his foolish fancy. One of these young brains is like a bunch of India crackers; once touch fire to it and it is best to keep hands off until it has done popping,—if it ever stops. I have two letters on file; one is a pattern of adulation, the other of impertinence. My reply to the first, containing the best advice I could give, conveyed in courteous language, had brought out the second. There was some sport in this, but Dulness is not commonly a game fish, and only sulks after he is struck. You may set it down as a truth which admits of few exceptions, that those who ask your *opinion* really want your *praise*, and will be contented with nothing less.

There is another kind of application to which editors, or those supposed to have access to them, are liable, and which often proves trying and painful. One is appealed to in behalf of some person in needy circumstances who wishes to make a living by the pen. A manuscript accompanying the letter is offered for publication. It is not commonly brilliant, too often lamentably deficient. If Rachel's saying is true, that "fortune is the measure of intelligence," then poverty is evidence of limited capacity, which it too frequently proves to be, notwithstanding a noble exception here and there. Now an editor is a person under a contract with the public to furnish them with the best things he can afford for his money. Charity shown by the publication of an inferior article would be like the generosity of Claude Duval and the other gentlemen highwaymen, who pitied the poor so much they robbed the rich to have the means of relieving them.

Though I am not and never was an editor, I know something of the trials to which they are submitted. They have nothing to do but to develope enormous calluses at every point of contact with authorship. Their business is not a matter of sympathy, but of intellect. They must reject the unfit productions of those whom they long to befriend, because it would be a profligate charity to accept them. One cannot burn his house down to warm the hands even of the fatherless and the widow.

THE PROFESSOR UNDER CHLOROFORM.

—— You haven't heard about my friend the Professor's first experiment in the use of anæsthetics, have you?

He was mightily pleased with the reception of that poem of his about the chaise. He spoke to me once or twice about another poem of similar character he wanted to read me, which I told him I would listen to and criticize.

One day, after dinner, he came in with his face tied up, looking very red in the cheeks and heavy about the eyes.—Hy'r'ye?—he said, and made for an armchair, in which he placed first his hat and then his person, going smack through the crown of the former as neatly as they do the trick at the circus. The Professor jumped at the explosion as if he had sat down on one of those small *calthrops* our grandfathers used to sow round in the grass when there were Indians about,—iron stars, each ray a rusty thorn an inch and a half long,—stick through moccasins into feet,—cripple 'em on the spot, and give 'em lockjaw in a day or two.

The Professor let off one of those big words which lie at the bottom of the best man's vocabulary, but perhaps never turn up in his life,—just as every man's hair *may* stand on end, but in most men it never does.

After he had got calm, he pulled out a sheet or two of manuscript, together with a smaller scrap, on which, as he said, he had just been writing an introduction or prelude to the main performance. A certain suspicion had come into my mind that the Professor was not quite right, which was confirmed by the way he talked; but I let him begin. This is the way he read it:—

Prelude.

I'M the fellah that tole one day
The tale of the won'erful one-hoss-shay.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Wan' to hear another? Say.
—Funny, wasn'it? Made *me* laugh,—
I'm too modest, I am, by half,—
Made me laugh '*s though I sh'd split*,—
Cahn' a fellah like fellah's own wit?
—Fellahs keep sayin', — "Well, now that's nice;
Did it once, but cahn' do it twice."—
Dōn' you b'lieve the'z no more fat;
Lots in the kitch'n 'z good 'z that.
Fus'-rate throw, 'n' no mistake,—
Han' us the props for another shake;—
Know I'll try, 'n' guess I'll win;
Here sh' goes for hit 'm ag'in!

Here I thought it necessary to interpose.—Professor,—I said,—you are inebriated. The style of what you call your "Prelude" shows that it was written under cerebral excitement. Your articulation is confused. You have told me three times in succession, in exactly the same words, that I was the only true friend you had in the world that you would unbutton your heart to. You smell distinctly and decidedly of spirits.—I spoke, and paused; tender, but firm.

Two large tears orbed themselves beneath the Professor's lids,—in obedience to the principle of gravitation celebrated in that delicious bit of bladdery bathos, "The very law that moulds a tear," with which the "Edinburgh Review" attempted to put down Master George Gordon when that young man was foolishly trying to make himself conspicuous.

One of these tears peeped over the edge of the lid until it lost its balance,—slid an inch and waited for reinforcements,—swelled again,—rolled down a little further, — stopped, — moved on, — and at last fell on the back of the Professor's hand. He held it up for me to look at, and lifted his eyes, brimful, till they met mine.

I couldn't stand it,—I always break down when folks cry in my face,—so I hugged him, and said he was a dear old boy, and asked him kindly what was the matter with him, and what made him smell so dreadfully strong of spirits.

Upset his alcohol lamp,—he said,—and spilt the alcohol on his legs. That was it. —But what had he been doing to get his head into such a state?—had he really committed an excess? What was the matter?—Then it came out that he had been taking chloroform to have a tooth out, which had left him in a very queer state, in which he had written the "Prelude" given above, and under the influence of which he evidently was still.

I took the manuscript from his hands and read the following continuation of the lines he had begun to read me, while he made up for two or three nights' lost sleep as he best might.

PARSON TURELL'S LEGACY:

OR, THE PRESIDENT'S OLD ARM-CHAIR.

FACTS respecting an old arm-chair.
At Cambridge. Is kept in the College there.
Seems but little the worse for wear.
That's remarkable when I say
It was old in President Holyoke's day.
(One of his boys, perhaps you know,
Died, *at one hundred*, years ago.)
He took lodging for rain or shine
Under green bed-clothes in '69.

Know old Cambridge? Hope you do.—
Born there? Don't say so! I was, too.
(Born in a house with a gambrel-roof,—
Standing still, if you must have proof.—
"Gambrel?—Gambrel?"—Let me beg
You'll look at a horse's hinder leg,—
First great angle above the hoof,—
That's the gambrel; hence gambrel-roof.)
—Nicest place that ever was seen,—
Colleges red and Common green,
Sidewalks brownish with trees between.
Sweetest spot beneath the skies
When the canker-worms don't rise,—.
When the dust, that sometimes flies
Into your mouth and ears and eyes,
In a quiet slumber lies,
Not in the shape of unbaked pies
Such as barefoot children prize.

A kind of harbor it seems to be,
Facing the flow of a boundless sea.
Rows of gray old Tutors stand
Ranged like rocks above the sand;
Rolling beneath them, soft and green,
Breaks the tide of bright sixteen,—
One wave, two waves, three waves, four,
Sliding up the sparkling floor;
Then it ebbs to flow no more,
Wandering off from shore to shore
With its freight of golden ore!
—Pleasant place for boys to play;—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Better keep your girls away;
Hearts get rolled as pebbles do
Which countless fingering waves pursue,
And every classic beach is strown
With heart-shaped pebbles of blood-red stone.

But this is neither here nor there;—
I'm talking about an old arm-chair.
You've heard, no doubt, of PARSON TURELL?
Over at Medford he used to dwell;
Married one of the Mather's folk;
Got with his wife a chair of oak,—
Funny old chair, with seat like wedge,
Sharp behind and broad front edge,—
One of the oddest of human things,
Turned all over with knobs and rings,—
But heavy, and wide, and deep, and grand,—
Fit for the worthies of the land,—
Chief-Justice Sewall a cause to try in,
Or Cotton Mather to sit—and lie—in.
—Parson Turell bequeathed the same
To a certain student,—SMITH by name;
These were the terms, as we are told:
"Saide Smith saide Chaire to have and holde;
When he doth graduate, then to passe
To ye oldest Youth in ye Senior Classe,
On Payment of"—(naming a certain sum)—
"By him to whom ye Chaire shall come;
He to ye oldest Senior next,
And soe forever,"—(thus runs the text,)—
"But one Crown lesse then he gave to claime,
That being his Debte for use of same."

Smith transferred it to one of the BROWNS,
And took his money,—five silver crowns.
Brown delivered it up to MOORE,
Who paid, it is plain, not five, but four.
Moore made over the chair to LEE,
Who gave him crowns of silver three.
Lee conveyed it unto DREW,
And now the payment, of course, was two.
Drew gave up the chair to DUNN,—
All he got, as you see, was one.
Dunn released the chair to HALL,
And got by the bargain no crown at all.
—And now it passed to a second BROWN,
Who took it, and likewise *claimed a crown.*
When *Brown* conveyed it unto WARE,
Having had one crown, to make it fair,
He paid him two crowns to take the chair;
And *Ware*, being honest, (as all Wares be,)
He paid one POTTER, who took it, three.
Four got ROBINSON; five got DIX;
JOHNSON *primus* demanded six;
And so the sum kept gathering still
Till after the battle of Bunker's Hill.
—When paper money became so cheap,
Folks wouldn't count it, but said "a heap,"
A certain RICHARDS, the books declare,
(A. M. in '90? I've looked with care
Through the Triennial,—*name not there,*)
This person, Richards, was offered then
Eight score pounds, but would have ten;
Nine, I think, was the sum he took,—
Not quite certain,—but see the book.
—By and by the wars were still,
But nothing had altered the Parson's will.
The old arm-chair was solid yet,
But saddled with such a monstrous debt!
Things grew quite too bad to bear,
Paying such sums to get rid of the chair!
But dead men's fingers hold awful tight,
And there was the will in black and white,
Plain enough for a child to spell.
What should be done no man could tell,
For the chair was a kind of nightmare curse,
And every season but made it worse.

As a last resort, to clear the doubt,
They got old GOVERNOR HANCOCK out.
The Governor came with his Light-horse Troop
And his mounted truckmen, all cock-a-hoop;
Halberds glittered and colors flew,
French horns whinnied and trumpets blew,
The yellow fifes whistled between their teeth
And the bumble-bee bass-drums boomed beneath;
So he rode with all his band,
Till the President met him, cap in hand.
—The Governor "hefted" the crowns, and said,—
"A will is a will, and the Parson's dead."
The Governor hefted the crowns. Said he,—
"There is your p'int. And here's my fee.
These are the terms you must fulfil,—
On such conditions I BREAK THE WILL!"
The Governor mentioned what these should be.
(Just wait a minute and then you'll see.)
The President prayed. Then all was still,
And the Governor rose and BROKE THE WILL!
—"About those conditions?" Well, now you go
And do as I tell you, and then you'll know.
Once a year, on Commencement-day,
If you'll only take the pains to stay,
You'll see the President in the CHAIR,
Likewise the Governor sitting there.
The President rises; both old and young
May hear his speech in a foreign tongue,
The meaning whereof, as lawyers swear,
Is this: Can I keep this old arm-chair?
And then his Excellency bows,
As much as to say that he allows.
The Vice-Gub. next is called by name;
He bows like t'other, which means the same.
And all the officers round 'em bow,
As much as to say that *they* allow.
And a lot of parchments about the chair
Are handed to witnesses then and there,
And then the lawyers hold it clear
That the chair is safe for another year.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

God bless you, Gentlemen! Learn to give
Money to colleges while you live.
Don't be silly and think you'll try
To bother the colleges, when you die,
With codicil this, and codicil that,
That Knowledge may starve while Law grows fat;
For there never was pitcher that wouldn't spill,
And there's always a flaw in a donkey's will!

——Hospitality is a good deal a matter of latitude, I suspect. The shade of a palm-tree serves an African for a hut; his dwelling is all door and no walls; everybody can come in. To make a morning call on an Esquimaux acquaintance, one must creep through a long tunnel; his house is all walls and no door, except such a one as an apple with a worm-hole has. One might, very probably, trace a regular gradation between these two extremes. In cities where the evenings are generally hot, the people have porches at their doors, where they sit, and this is, of course, a provocative to the interchange of civilities. A good deal, which in colder regions is ascribed to mean dispositions, belongs really to mean temperature.

Once in a while, even in our Northern cities, at noon, in a very hot summer's day, one may realize, by a sudden extension in his sphere of consciousness, how closely he is shut up for the most part.—Do you not remember something like this? July, between 1 and 2, P. M. Fahrenheit 96°, or thereabout. Windows all gaping, like the mouths of panting dogs. Long, stinging cry of a locust comes in from a tree, half a mile off; had forgotten there was such a tree. Baby's screams from a house several blocks distant;—never knew of any babies in the neighborhood before. Tinman pounding something that clatters dreadfully,—very distinct, but don't know of any tinman's shop near by. Horses stamping on pavement to get off flies. When you hear these four sounds, you may set it down as a warm day. Then it is that one would like to imitate the mode of life of the native at Sierra Leone, as somebody has described it: stroll into the market in natural costume,—buy a water-melon for a halfpenny,—split it, and scoop out the middle,—sit down in one half of the empty rind, clap the other on one's head, and feast upon the pulp.

——I see some of the London journals have been attacking some of their literary people for lecturing, on the ground of its being a public exhibition of themselves for money. A popular author can print his lecture; if he deliver it, it is a case of *quæstum corpore*, or making profit of his person. None but "snobs" do that. *Ergo*, etc. To this I reply,—*Negatur minor.* Her Most Gracious Majesty, the Queen, exhibits herself to the public as a part of the service for which she is paid. We do not consider it low-bred in her to pronounce her own speech, and should prefer it so to hearing it from any other person or reading it. His Grace and his Lordship exhibit themselves very often for popularity, and their houses every day for money.—No, if a man shows himself other than he is, if he belittles himself before an audience for hire, then he acts unworthily. But a true word, fresh from the lips of a true man, is worth paying for, at the rate of eight dollars a day, or even of fifty dollars a lecture. The taunt must be an outbreak of jealousy against the renowned authors who have the audacity to be also orators. The sub-lieutenants of the press stick a too popular writer and speaker with an epithet in England, instead of with a rapier, as in France.—Poh! All England is one great menagerie, and, all at once, the jackal, who admires the gilded cage of the royal beast, must protest against the vulgarity of the talking-bird's and the nightingale's being willing to become a part of the exhibition!

THE LONG PATH.

(*Last of the Parentheses.*)

Yes, that was my last walk with the *schoolmistress.* It happened to be the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

end of a term; and before the next began, a very nice young woman, who had been her assistant, was announced as her successor, and she was provided for elsewhere. So it was no longer the schoolmistress that I walked with, but——Let us not be in unseemly haste. I shall call her the schoolmistress still; some of you love her under that name.

—— When it became known among the boarders that two of their number had joined hands to walk down the long path of life side by side, there was, as you may suppose, no small sensation. I confess I pitied our landlady. It took her all of a suddin,—she said. Had not known that we was keepin' company, and never mistrusted anything partic'lar. Ma'am was right to better herself. Didn't look very rugged to take care of a family, but could get hired haälp, she calc'lated.—The great maternal instinct came crowding up in her soul just then, and her eyes wandered until they settled on her daughter.

—— No, poor, dear woman, — that could not have been. But I am dropping one of my internal tears for you, with this pleasant smile on my face all the time.

The great mystery of God's providence is the permitted crushing out of flowering instincts. Life is maintained by the respiration of oxygen and of sentiments. In the long catalogue of scientific cruelties there is hardly anything quite so painful to think of as that experiment of putting an animal under the bell of an air-pump and exhausting the air from it. [I never saw the accursed trick performed. *Laus Deo!*] There comes a time when the souls of human beings, women, perhaps, more even than men, begin to faint for the atmosphere of the affections they were made to breathe. Then it is that Society places its transparent bell-glass over the young woman who is to be the subject of one of its fatal experiments. The element by which only the heart lives is sucked out of her crystalline prison. Watch her through its transparent walls;—her bosom is heaving; but it is in a vacuum. Death is no riddle, compared to this. I remember a poor girl's story in the "Book of Martyrs." The "dry-pan and the gradual fire" were the images that frightened her most. How many have withered and wasted under as slow a torment in the walls of that larger Inquisition which we call Civilization!

Yes, my surface-thought laughs at you, you foolish, plain, overdressed, mincing, cheaply-organized, self-saturated young person, whoever you may be, now reading this,—little thinking you are what I describe, and in blissful unconsciousness that you are destined to the lingering asphyxia of soul which is the lot of such multitudes worthier than yourself. But it is only my surface-thought which laughs. For that great procession of the UNLOVED, who not only wear the crown of thorns, but must hide it under the locks of brown or gray, — under the snowy cap, under the chilling turban,—hide it even from themselves,—perhaps never know they wear it, though it kills them,—there is no depth of tenderness in my nature that Pity has not sounded. Somewhere, — somewhere, — love is in store for them,—the universe must not be allowed to fool them so cruelly. What infinite pathos in the small, half-unconscious artifices by which unattractive young persons seek to recommend themselves to the favor of those towards whom our dear sisters, the unloved, like the rest, are impelled by their God-given instincts!

Read what the singing-women—one to ten thousand of the suffering women—tell us, and think of the griefs that die unspoken! Nature is in earnest when she makes a woman; and there are women enough lying in the next churchyard with very commonplace blue slate-stones at their head and feet, for whom it was just as true that "all sounds of life assumed one tone of love," as for Letitia Landon, of whom Elizabeth Browning said it; but she could give words to her grief, and they could not.—Will you hear a few stanzas of mine?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE VOICELESS.

We count the broken lyres that rest
  Where the sweet wailing singers slumber,—
But o'er their silent sister's breast
  The wild flowers who will stoop to number?
A few can touch the magic string,
  And noisy Fame is proud to win them;—
Alas for those that never sing,
  But die with all their music in them!

Nay, grieve not for the dead alone
  Whose song has told their hearts' sad story,—
Weep for the voiceless, who have known
  The cross without the crown of glory!
Not where Leucadian breezes sweep
  O'er Sappho's memory-haunted billow,
But where the glistening night-dews weep
  On nameless sorrow's churchyard pillow.

O hearts that break and give no sign
  Save whitening lip and fading tresses,
Till Death pours out his cordial wine
  Slow-dropped from Misery's crushing presses,—
If singing breath or echoing chord
  To every hidden pang were given,
What endless melodies were poured,
  As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven!

I hope that our landlady's daughter is not so badly off, after all. That young man from another city, who made the remark which you remember about Boston State-house and Boston folks, has appeared at our table repeatedly of late, and has seemed to me rather attentive to this young lady. Only last evening I saw him leaning over her while she was playing the accordion,—indeed, I undertook to join them in a song, and got as far as "Come rest in this boo-oo," when, my voice getting tremulous, I turned off, as one steps out of a procession, and left the basso and soprano to finish it. I see no reason why this young woman should not be a very proper match for a man that laughs about Boston State-house. He can't be very particular.

The young fellow whom I have so often mentioned was a little free in his remarks, but very good-natured.—Sorry to have you go,—he said.—Schoolma'am made a mistake not to wait for me. Haven't taken anything but mournin' fruit at breakfast since I heard of it. —— *Mourning fruit*,—said I,—what's that? —— Huckleberries and blackberries,—said he;—couldn't eat in colors, raspberries, currants, and such, after a solemn thing like this happening.—The conceit seemed to please the young fellow. If you will believe it, when we came down to breakfast the next morning, he had carried it out as follows. You know those odious little "saüs-plates" that figure so largely at boarding-houses, and especially at taverns, into which a strenuous attendant female trowels little dabs, sombre of tint and heterogeneous of composition, which it makes you feel homesick to look at, and into which you poke the elastic coppery teaspoon with the air of a cat dipping her foot into a wash-tub,—(not that I mean to say anything against them, for, when they are of tinted porcelain or starry many-faceted crystal, and hold clean bright berries, or pale virgin honey, or "lucent syrups tinct with cinnamon," and the teaspoon is of white silver, with the Tower-stamp, solid, but not brutally heavy,—as people in the green stage of millionism will have them,—I can dally with their amber semi-fluids or glossy spherules without a shiver,)—you know these small, deep dishes, I say. When we came down the next morning, each of these (two only excepted) was covered with a broad leaf. On lifting this, each boarder found a small heap of solemn black huckleberries. But one of those plates held red currants, and was covered with a red rose; the other held white currants, and was covered with a white rose. There was a laugh at this at first, and then a short silence, and I noticed that her lip trembled, and the old gentleman opposite was in trouble to get at his bandanna handkerchief.

—— "What was the use in waiting? We should be too late for Switzerland, that season, if we waited much longer."—The hand I held trembled in mine, and the eyes fell meekly, as Esther bowed herself before the feet of Ahasuerus.—She had been reading that chapter, for

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

she looked up,—if there was a film of moisture over her eyes, there was also the faintest shadow of a distant smile skirting her lips, but not enough to accent the dimples,—and said, in her pretty, still way,—"If it please the king, and if I have found favor in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes"——

I don't remember what King Ahasuerus did or said when Esther got just to that point of her soft, humble words,—but I know what I did. That quotation from Scripture was cut short, anyhow. We came to a compromise on the great question, and the time was settled for the last day of summer.

In the mean time, I talked on with our boarders, much as usual, as you may see by what I have reported. I must say, I was pleased with a certain tenderness they all showed toward us, after the first excitement of the news was over. It came out in trivial matters,—but each one, in his or her way, manifested kindness. Our landlady, for instance, when we had chickens, sent the *liver* instead of the *gizzard*, with the wing, for the schoolmistress. This was not an accident; the two are *never* mistaken, though some landladies *appear* as if they did not know the difference. The whole of the company were even more respectfully attentive to my remarks than usual. There was no idle punning, and very little winking on the part of that lively young gentleman who, as the reader may remember, occasionally interposed some playful question or remark, which could hardly be considered relevant,—except when the least allusion was made to matrimony, when he would look at the landlady's daughter, and wink with both sides of his face, until she would ask what he was pokin' his fun at her for, and if he wasn't ashamed of himself. In fact, they all behaved very handsomely, so that I really felt sorry at the thought of leaving my boarding-house.

I suppose you think, that, because I lived at a plain widow-woman's plain table, I was of course more or less infirm in point of worldly fortune. You may not be sorry to learn, that, though not what *great merchants* call very rich, I was comfortable,—comfortable,— so that most of those moderate luxuries I described in my verses on *Contentment*—*most* of them, I say—were within our reach, if we chose to have them. But I found out that the schoolmistress had a vein of charity about her, which had hitherto been worked on a small silver and copper basis, which made her think less, perhaps, of luxuries than even I did,—modestly as I have expressed my wishes.

It is rather a pleasant thing to tell a poor young woman, whom one has contrived to win without showing his rent-roll, that she has found what the world values so highly, in following the lead of her affections. That was a luxury I was now ready for.

I began abruptly:—Do you know that you are a rich young person?

I know that I am very rich,—she said.—Heaven has given me more than I ever asked; for I had not thought love was ever meant for me.

It was a woman's confession, and her voice fell to a whisper as it threaded the last words.

I don't mean that,—I said,—you blessed little saint and seraph!—if there's an angel missing in the New Jerusalem, inquire for her at this boarding-house!—I don't mean that; I mean that I—that is, you—am—are—confound it!—I mean that you'll be what most people call a lady of fortune.—And I looked full in her eyes for the effect of the announcement.

There wasn't any. She said she was thankful that I had what would save me from drudgery, and that some other time I should tell her about it.—I never made a greater failure in an attempt to produce a sensation.

So the last day of summer came. It was our choice to go to the church, but we had a kind of reception at the boarding-house. The presents were all arranged, and among them none gave more

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pleasure than the modest tributes of our fellow-boarders,—for there was not one, I believe, who did not send something. The landlady would insist on making an elegant bride-cake, with her own hands; to which Master Benjamin Franklin wished to add certain embellishments out of his private funds,—namely, a Cupid in a mouse-trap, done in white sugar, and two miniature flags with the stars and stripes, which had a very pleasing effect, I assure you. The landlady's daughter sent a richly bound copy of Tupper's Poems. On a blank leaf was the following, written in a very delicate and careful hand:—

Presented to . . . by . . .
On the eve ere her union in holy matrimony.
May sunshine ever beam o'er her!

Even the poor relative thought she must do something, and sent a copy of "The Whole Duty of Man," bound in very attractive variegated sheepskin, the edges nicely marbled. From the divinity-student came the loveliest English edition of "Keble's Christian Year." I opened it, when it came, to the *Fourth Sunday in Lent*, and read that angelic poem, sweeter than anything I can remember since Xavier's "My God, I love thee."——I am not a Churchman,—I don't believe in planting oaks in flower-pots,—but such a poem as "The Rose-bud" makes one's heart a proselyte to the culture it grows from. Talk about it as much as you like,—one's breeding shows itself nowhere more than in his religion. A man should be a gentleman in his hymns and prayers; the fondness for "scenes," among vulgar saints, contrasts so meanly with that—

"God only and good angels look
Behind the blissful scene,"—

and that other,—

"He could not trust his melting soul
But in his Maker's sight,"—

that I hope some of them will see this, and read the poem, and profit by it.

My laughing and winking young friend undertook to procure and arrange the flowers for the table, and did it with immense zeal. I never saw him look happier than when he came in, his hat saucily on one side, and a cheroot in his mouth, with a huge bunch of tea-roses, which he said were for "Madam."

One of the last things that came was an old square box, smelling of camphor, tied and sealed. It bore, in faded ink, the marks, "Calcutta, 1805." On opening it, we found a white Cashmere shawl, with a very brief note from the dear old gentleman opposite, saying that he had kept this some years, thinking he might want it, and many more, not knowing what to do with it,—that he had never seen it unfolded since he was a young supercargo,—and now, if she would spread it on her shoulders, it would make him feel young to look at it.

Poor Bridget, or Biddy, our red-armed maid of all work! What must she do but buy a small copper breast-pin and put it under "Schoolma'am's" plate that morning, at breakfast? And Schoolma'am would wear it,—though I made her cover it, as well as I could, with a tea-rose.

It was my last breakfast as a boarder, and I could not leave them in utter silence.

Good-bye,—I said,—my dear friends, one and all of you! I have been long with you, and I find it hard parting. I have to thank you for a thousand courtesies, and above all for the patience and indulgence with which you have listened to me when I have tried to instruct or amuse you. My friend the Professor (who, as well as my friend the Poet, is unavoidably absent on this interesting occasion) has given me reason to suppose that he would occupy my empty chair about the first of January next. If he comes among you, be kind to him, as you have been to me. May the Lord bless you all!—And we shook hands all round the table.

Half an hour afterwards the breakfast things and the cloth were gone. I looked up and down the length of the bare

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

boards, over which I had so often uttered my sentiments and experiences—and——Yes, I am a man, like another.

All sadness vanished, as, in the midst of these old friends of mine, whom you know, and others a little more up in the world, perhaps, to whom I have not introduced you, I took the schoolmistress before the altar from the hands of the old gentleman who used to sit opposite, and who would insist on giving her away.

And now we two are walking the long path in peace together. The "schoolmistress" finds her skill in teaching called for again, without going abroad to seek little scholars. Those visions of mine have all come true.

I hope you all love me none the less for anything I have told you. Farewell!

THE DOT AND LINE ALPHABET.

JUST in the triumph week of that Great Telegraph which takes its name from the ATLANTIC MONTHLY, I read in the September number of that journal the revelations of an observer who was surprised to find that he had the power of reading, as they run, the revelations of the wire. I had the hope that he was about to explain to the public the more general use of this instrument,—which, with a stupid fatuity, the public has, as yet, failed to grasp. Because its signals have been first applied by means of electro-magnetism, and afterwards by means of the chemical power of electricity, the many-headed people refuses to avail itself, as it might do very easily, of the same signals, for the simpler transmission of intelligence,—whatever the power employed.

The great invention of Mr. Morse is his register and alphabet. He himself eagerly disclaims any pretension to the original conception of the use of electricity as an errand-boy. Hundreds of people had thought of that and suggested it; but Morse was the first to give the errand-boy such a written message, that he could not lose it on the way, nor mistake it when he arrived. The public, eager to thank Morse, as he deserves, thanks him for something he did not invent. For this he probably cares very little. Nor do I care more. But the public does not thank him for what he did originate,—this invaluable and simple alphabet. Now, as I use it myself in every detail of life, and see every hour how the public might use it, if it chose, I am really sorry for this negligence,—both on the score of his fame, and of general convenience.

Please to understand, then, ignorant Reader, that this curious alphabet reduces all the complex machinery of Cadmus and the rest of the writing-masters to characters as simple as can be made by a dot, a space, and a line, variously combined. Thus, the marks · — designate the letter A. The marks — · · · designate the letter B. All the other letters are designated in as simple a manner.

Now I am stripping myself of one of the private comforts of my life, (but what will one not do for mankind?) when I explain that this simple alphabet need not be confined to electrical signals. *Long* and *short* make it all,—and wherever long and short can be combined, be it in marks, sounds, sneezes, fainting-fits, canes, or children, ideas can be conveyed by this arrangement of the long and short together. Only last night I was talking scandal with Mrs. Wilberforce at a summer party at the Hammersmiths. To my amazement, my wife, who scarcely can play "The Fisher's Hornpipe," interrupted us by asking Mrs. Wilberforce if she could give her the idea of an air in "The Butcher of Turin."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mrs. Wilberforce had never heard that opera,—indeed, had never heard of it. My angel-wife was surprised, — stood thrumming at the piano,—wondered she could not catch this very odd bit of discordant accord at all,—but checked herself in her effort, as soon as I observed that her long notes and short notes, in their tum-tee, tee,—tee-tee, tee-tum tum, meant, "He's her brother." The conversation on her side turned from "The Butcher of Turin," and I had just time, on the hint thus given me by Mrs. I., to pass a grateful eulogium on the distinguished statesman whom Mrs. Wilberforce, with all a sister's care, had rocked in his baby-cradle,—whom, but for my wife's long and short notes, I should have clumsily abused among the other statesmen of the day.

You will see, in an instant, awakening Reader, that it is not the business simply of "operators" in telegraphic dens to know this Morse alphabet, but your business, and that of every man and woman. If our school-committees understood the times, it would be taught, even before phonography or physiology, at school. I believe both these sciences now precede the old English alphabet.

As I write these words, the bell of the South Congregational strikes dong, dong, dong; —— dong, dong, dong, dong, — dong,—dong. Nobody has unlocked the church-door. The old tin sign, "In case of fire, the key will be found at the opposite house," has long since been taken down, and made into the nose of a water-pot. Yet there is no Goody Two-Shoes locked in. No! But, thanks to Dr. Channing's Fire-Alarm, the bell is informing the South End that there is a fire in District Dong-dong-dong, — that is to say, District No. 3. Before I have explained to you so far, the "Eagle" engine, with a good deal of noise, has passed the house on its way to that fated district. An immense improvement this on the old system, when the engines radiated from their houses in every possible direction, and the fire was extinguished by the few machines whose lines of quest happened to cross each other at the particular place where the child had been building cob-houses out of lucifer-matches in a paper-warehouse. Yes, it is a very great improvement. All those persons, like you and me, who have no property in District Dong-dong-dong, can now sit at home at ease,—and little need we think upon the mud above the knees of those who have property in that district and are running to look after it. But for them the improvement only brings misery. You arrive wet, hot or cold, or both, at the large District No. 3, to find that the lucifer-matches were half a mile from your store,—and that your own private watchman, even, had not been waked by the working of the distant engines. Wet property-holder, as you walk home, consider this. When you are next in the Common Council, vote an appropriation for applying Morse's alphabet of long and short to the bells. Then they can be made to sound intelligibly. Dāūng dĭng dĭng,—dĭng,—dĭng dāūng,—dāūng dāūng dāūng, and so on, will tell you, as you wake in the night, that it is Mr. B.'s store which is on fire, and not yours, or that it is yours, and not his. This is not only a convenience to you and a relief to your wife and family, who will thus be spared your excursions to unavailable and unsatisfactory fires, and your somewhat irritated return,—it will be a great relief to the Fire Department. How placid the operations of a fire where none attend except on business! The various engines arrive, but no throng of distant citizens, men and boys, fearful of the destruction of their all. They have all roused on their pillows to learn that it is No. 530 Pearl Street which is in flames. All but the owner of No. 530 Pearl Street have dropped back to sleep. He alone has rapidly repaired to the scene. That is he, who stands in the uncrowded street with the Chief Engineer, on the deck of No. 18, as she plays away. His property destroyed, the engines retire,—he mentions the amount of his insurance to those persons who represent the daily press, they all retire to their homes,—and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the whole is finished as simply, almost, as was his private entry in his day-book the afternoon before.

This is what might be, if the magnetic alarm only struck *long* and *short*, and we had all learned Morse's alphabet. Indeed, there is nothing the bells could not tell, if you would only give them time enough. We have only one chime, for musical purposes, in the town. But, without attempting tunes, only give the bells the Morse alphabet, and every bell in Boston might chant in monotone the words of "Hail Columbia" at length, every Fourth of July. Indeed, if Mr. Barnard should report any day that a discouraged 'prentice-boy had left town for his country home, all the bells could instantly be set to work to speak articulately, in language regarding which the dullest imagination need not be at loss,

"Turn again, Higginbottom,
Lord Mayor of Boston!"

I have suggested the propriety of introducing this alphabet into the primary schools. I need not say I have taught it to my own children,—and I have been gratified to see how rapidly it made head, against the more complex alphabet, in the grammar schools. Of course it does; —an alphabet of two characters matched against one of twenty-six,—or of forty-odd, as the very odd one of the phonotypists employs! On the Franklin-medal-day I went to the Johnson-School examination. One of the committee asked a nice girl, what was the capital of Brazil. The child looked tired and pale, and, for an instant, hesitated. But, before she had time to commit herself, all answering was rendered impossible by an awful turn of whooping-cough which one of my own sons was seized with,—who had gone to the examination with me. Hawm, hem hem;—hem hem hem;—hem, hem;—hawm, hem hem;—hem hem hem;—hem, hem,—barked the poor child, who was at the opposite extreme of the school-room. The spectators and the committee looked to see him fall dead with a broken blood-vessel. I confess that I felt no alarm, after I observed that some of his gasps were long and some very *staccato;* —nor did pretty little Mabel Warren. She recovered her color,—and, as soon as silence was in the least restored, answered, "*Rio* is the capital of Brazil,"—as modestly and properly as if she had been taught it in her cradle. They are nothing but children, any of them,—but that afternoon, after they had done all the singing the city needed for its annual entertainment of the singers, I saw Bob and Mabel start for a long expedition into West Roxbury,—and when he came back, I know it was a long featherfew, from her prize school-bouquet, that he pressed in his Greene's "Analysis," with a short frond of maiden's hair.

I hope nobody will write a letter to "The Atlantic," to say that these are very trifling uses. The communication of useful information is never trifling. It is as important to save a nice child from mortification on examination-day, as it is to tell Mr. Fremont that he is not elected President. If, however, the reader is distressed, because these illustrations do not seem to his more benighted observation to belong to the big bow-wow strain of human life, let him consider the arrangement which ought to have been made years since, for lee shores, railroad collisions, and that curious class of maritime accidents where one steamer runs into another under the impression that she is a light-house. Imagine the Morse alphabet applied to a steam-whistle, which is often heard five miles. It needs only *long* and *short* again. "*Stop Comet,*" for instance, when you send it down the railroad line, by the wire, is expressed thus: ··· — ·· ····
·· · ·· — — · —

Very good message, if Comet happens to be at the telegraph station when it comes! But what if Comet has gone by? Much good will your trumpery message do then! If, however, you have the wit to sound your long and short on an engine-whistle, thus:—Scre scre, scre; screeee; scre scre; scre scre scre scre; scre scre—scre, scre scre, screeeee screeeee; scre; screeeee;—why, then the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whole neighborhood, for five miles round, will know that Comet must stop, if only they understand spoken language,—and, among others, the engineman of Comet will understand it; and Comet will not run into that wreck of worlds which gives the order,—with his nucleus of hot iron and his tail of five hundred tons of coal.—So, of the signals which fog-bells can give, attached to light-houses. How excellent to have them proclaim through the darkness, "I am Wall"! Or of signals for steamship-engineers. When our friends were on board the "Arabia" the other day, and she and the "Europa" pitched into each other,—as if, on that happy week, all the continents were to kiss and join hands all round,—how great the relief to the passengers on each, if, through every night of their passage, collision had been prevented by this simple expedient! One boat would have screamed, "Europa, Europa, Europa," from night to morning,—and the other, "Arabia, Arabia, Arabia,"—and neither would have been mistaken, as one unfortunately was, for a light-house.

The long and short of it is, that whoever can mark distinctions of time can use this alphabet of long-and-short, however he may mark them. It is, therefore, within the compass of all intelligent beings, except those who are no longer conscious of the passage of time, having exchanged its limitations for the wider sweep of eternity. The illimitable range of this alphabet, however, is not half disclosed when this has been said. Most articulate language addresses itself to one sense, or at most to two, sight and sound. I see, as I write, that the particular illustrations I have given are all of them confined to signals seen or signals heard. But the dot-and-line alphabet, in the few years of its history, has already shown that it is not restricted to these two senses, but makes itself intelligible to all. Its message, of course, is heard as well as read. Any good operator understands the sounds of its ticks upon the flowing strip of paper, as well as when he sees it. As he lies in his cot at midnight, he will expound the passing message without striking a light to see it. But this is only what may be said of any written language. You can read this article to your wife, or she can read it, as she prefers; that is, she chooses whether it shall address her eye or her ear. But the long-and-short alphabet of Morse and his imitators despises such narrow range. It addresses whichever of the five senses the listener chooses. This fact is illustrated by a curious set of anecdotes—never yet put in print, I think—of that critical dispatch which in one night announced General Taylor's death to this whole land. Most of the readers of these lines probably read that dispatch in the morning's paper. The compositors and editors had read it. To them it was a dispatch to the eye. But half the operators at the stations *heard* it ticked out, by the register stroke, and knew it before they wrote it down for the press. To them it was a dispatch to the ear. My good friend Langenzunge had not that resource. He had just been promised, by the General himself, (under whom he served at Palo Alto,) the office of Superintendent of the Rocky-Mountain Lines. He was returning from Washington over the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, on a freight-train, when he heard of the President's danger. Langenzunge loved Old Rough and Ready,—and he felt badly about his own office, too. But his extempore train chose to stop at a forsaken shanty-village on the Potomac, for four mortal hours, at midnight. What does he do, but walk down the line into the darkness, climb a telegraph-post, cut a wire, and apply the two ends to his tongue, to *taste*, at the fatal moment, the words, "Died at half past ten." Poor Langenzunge! he hardly had nerve to solder the wire again. Cogs told me that they had just fitted up the Naguadavick stations with Bain's chemical revolving disc. This disc is charged with a salt of potash, which, when the electric spark passes through it, is changed to Prussian blue. Your dispatch is noiselessly written in dark blue dots and lines.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Just as the disc started on that fatal dispatch, and Cogs bent over it to read, his spirit-lamp blew up,—as the dear things will. They were beside themselves in the lonely, dark office; but, while the men were fumbling for matches, which would not go, Cogs's sister, Nydia, a sweet blind girl, who had learned Bain's alphabet from Dr. Howe at South Boston, bent over the chemical paper, and *smelt* out the prussiate of potash, as it formed itself in lines and dots to tell the sad story. Almost anybody used to reading the blind books can read the embossed Morse messages with the finger,—and so this message was read at all the midnight way-stations where no night-work is expected, and where the companies do not supply fluid or oil. Within my narrow circle of acquaintance, therefore, there were these simultaneous instances, where the same message was seen, heard, smelled, tasted, and felt. So universal is the dot-and-line alphabet,—for Bain's is on the same principle as Morse's.

The reader sees, therefore, first, that the dot-and-line alphabet can be employed by any being who has command of any long and short symbols,—be they long and short notches, such as Robinson Crusoe kept his accounts with, or long and short waves of electricity, such as these which Valentia is sending across to the Newfoundland Bay, so prophetically and appropriately named "The Bay of Bulls." Also, I hope the reader sees that the alphabet can be understood by any intelligent being who has any one of the five senses left him,—by all rational men, that is, excepting the few eyeless deaf persons who have lost both taste and smell in some complete paralysis. The use of Morse's telegraph is by no means confined to the small clique who possess or who understand electrical batteries. It is not only the torpedo or the *Gymnotus electricus* that can send us messages from the ocean. Whales in the sea can telegraph as well as senators on land, if they will only note the difference between long spoutings and short ones. And they can listen, too. If they will only note the difference between long and short, the eel of Ocean's bottom may feel on his slippery skin the smooth messages of our Presidents, and the catfish, in his darkness, look fearless on the secrets of a Queen. Any beast, bird, fish, or insect, which can discriminate between long and short, may use the telegraphic alphabet, if he have sense enough. Any creature, which can hear, smell, taste, feel, or see, may take note of its signals, if he can understand them. A tired listener at church, by properly varying his long yawns and his short ones, may express his opinion of the sermon to the opposite gallery before the sermon is done. A dumb tobacconist may trade with his customers in an alphabet of short-sixes and long-nines. A beleaguered Sebastopol may explain its wants to the relieving army beyond the line of the Chernaya, by the lispings of its short Paixhans and its long twenty-fours.

LITERARY NOTICES.

Études sur Pascal. Par M. Victor Cousin. Cinqième Edition, revue et augmentée. Paris: 1857. pp. 566. 8vo.

We render hearty thanks to M. Cousin for this new edition of a favorite work. No library which contains Pascal's "Provinciales" and "Pensées" should be without it.

"Of all the monuments of the French language," says M. Cousin, in the *Avant-propos* to this new edition, "none is more celebrated than the work 'Les Pensées,' and French literature possesses no artist more consummate than Pascal. Do not expect to find in this young geometrician, so soon consumed by disease and passion, the breadth, surface, and infinite variety

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Bossuet, who, supported by vast and uninterrupted study, rose and rose until he gained the loftiest reaches of intellect and art, and commanded at pleasure every tone and every style. Pascal did not fulfil all his destiny. Besides the mathematics and natural philosophy he knew scarcely more than a little theology, and he barely passed through good society. It is true, Pascal passed away from earth quickly; but during his short life he discerned glimpses of the *beau idéal*, he attached himself to it with all his heart and soul and strength, and he never allowed anything to leave his hands unless it bore its lively impress. So great was his passion for perfection, that unchallenged tradition tells us he wrote the seventeenth 'Provinciale' thirteen times over. 'Les Pensées' are merely fragments of the great work on which he consumed the last years of his life; but these fragments sometimes present so finished a beauty, that we do not know which most to admire, the grandeur and vigor of the sentiments and ideas, or the delicacy and depth of the art."

This praise is unexaggerated. What a career was run by this genius! Discovering the science of geometry at twelve years of age,—next inventing the arithmetical machine,—discovering atmospheric pressure, while every philosopher was prating about "Nature's horror of a vacuum,"—inventing the wheelbarrow, to divert his mind from the pains of the toothache, and succeeding,—inventing the theory of probabilities,—establishing the first omnibuses that ever relieved the public,—then writing the "Provinciales," —dying at thirty-three, leaving behind him two small volumes (you may carry them in your pocket) which are the unchallengeable title-deeds of his immortal fame, the favorite works of Gibbon, Voltaire, Macaulay, and Cousin! Where else can so crowded and so short a career be found?

It is scarcely possible to repress a smile in reading this work and discovering the patient care with which M. Cousin avoids speaking of the "Provinciales." And it is strange to say (no contemptible proof of the influence exercised by the Church of Rome, even when checked as it is in France) that no decent edition of the "Provinciales" can be found in the French language. While we possess M. Cousin's "Études sur Pascal," and M. Havet's edition of "Les Pensées," the only editions of "Les Provinciales" of recent date are the miserable publications of Charpentier and the Didots. Editions of Voltaire and Rousseau are numerous, elaborate, and elegant; for atheism is pardoned much more easily than abhorrence of the Jesuits.

The volume named at the head of this article contains a great many valuable documents relating to Pascal and his family: all of Pascal's correspondence known to exist, including his celebrated letter on the death of Étienne Pascal, his father, which is usually printed in "Les Pensées," being cut up into short sentences to fit it for that work, a large part of it being omitted; his singular essay on Love; curious details concerning the De Roanner family; an essay on the true text of the "Pensées"; a curious fac-simile of a page of that work; and a discussion (perhaps M. Cousin would say a refutation) of Pascal's philosophy. But we must protest against the easy manner in which M. Cousin wears his honors. When a book has reached its fifth edition and is evidently destined to a good many more during the author's lifetime, he lies under an obligation to place the new information he may have collected, and the additional thoughts which may have occurred to him, during the intervals between the different editions, in a form more convenient to the reader than new prefaces and new notes. To master the information contained in this work is no recreation, but a severe task, and one not to be accomplished except upon repeated perusals of the book. This is the more inexcusable because M. Cousin is now free from all official and professional cares; and it would involve the less labor to him, as he never writes, but dictates all his compositions.

Belle Brittan on a Tour; at Newport, and Here and There. New York: Derby & Jackson. 1858.

THE compulsion of hunger, or the request of friends, was the excuse for the printing of sorry books in Pope's time; and it has not become obsolete yet. The writer of the book, the title of which we have given above, pleads the latter alternative as the occasion of this publication. He says it was "a few friends" that pre-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ferred this request. It is unfortunate for him that he had any so void of judgment and empty of taste. He thinks his Letters will "receive unjust censure," as well as "undue praise." We think that he may relieve his mind of any such apprehension. We cannot think his book at all likely to receive more dispraise than it richly merits. A more discreditable one, not absolutely indictable, we hope, has seldom issued from the American press.

What motive the author had in assuming a female character, we know not. He certainly has been very unfortunate in his female acquaintance, if he accurately imitates their tone of thought and style of talk, in his letters. Should they happen to fall in the way of any foreigners, we beg them to believe that this is not the way in which American women converse. But we think that there can scarcely be a cockney so spoony as not to "spy a great peard under her muffler," and know that it is a man awkwardly masquerading in women's clothes. It is a libel on the women of the country, to put such balderdash into the mouth of one who may be supposed to have been finished at a fifth-rate boarding-school.

The letters are in the worst style of the "Own Correspondents" of third-rate papers. The "*deadhead*" perks itself in your face at every turn, in flunkeyish gratitude for invitations, drinks, dinners, and free passes,—from "the gentlemanly Lord Napier," down to "intelligent and gentlemanly" railway-conductors, "gentlemanly and attentive" hotel-clerks, "gracious, gentlemanly, and gallant" tavern-keepers, and their "lovely and accomplished brides." The soul of a footman is expressed by the pen of an abigail,—and the one not a Humphrey Clinker, nor the other a Winifred Jenkins,—and we are expected to admire the result as a good imitation of a lively, intelligent, well-bred American young lady! We protest against the profanation.

The letters take a wide range of subject, and treat of "Shakspeare, taste, and the musical glasses," in a vein that would have done no discredit to Lady Blarney and Miss Arabella Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs themselves. We might divert our readers with some specimens of criticism, or opinion, did our limits admit of such entertainment. We can only inform them, on Belle Brittan's authority, that worthy Dr. Charles Mackay, who suffers throughout the book from intermittent — nay, chronic — attacks of puffery, is "one of the best living poets of England"; Mademoiselle Lamoureux, the *danseuse*, is "better than Ellsler"; and pretty Mrs. John Wood, the lively *soubrette* of the Boston Theatre, "possesses many of the rarest requisites of a great actress"! But these are inanities which an inexperienced and half-taught girl might possibly utter in a familiar letter. Not so, we trust, as to the belief expressed by Belle Brittan, in puffing "Jim Parton's, Fanny Fern's Jim's," Life of Burr,—"more charming than a novel," because, as she implies, of the successful libertinism of its hero,—when she says, speaking in the name of the maidens of America, "We all, I suppose, must fall, like our first parents, when the hour of *our* temptation comes"!

We should not have given the space we have bestowed on this worthless book, had it not been made the occasion of newspaper puffs innumerable, recommending it to the public as something worthy of their time and money. It is one of the worst signs of our time that a false good-nature or imperfect taste should lead respectable papers to give currency to books destitute of all merit, by the application to them of stereotyped phrases of commendation. These letters, without a grace of style, without a flash of wit, without a genial ray of humor, deformed by coarse breeding, vulgar self-conceit, and ignorant assumption, are bepraised as if they were fresh from the mint of genius, and bore the image and superscription of Madame de Sévigné or Lady Mary Wortley! This evil must be cured, or the daily press may find that it will cure itself.

We know nothing of the author of this book, excepting what he has here shown us of himself. He may be capable of better things, and when they come before us, we shall rejoice to do them justice. But we advise him, first of all, to discard his disguise, which becomes him as ill as the gown of Mrs. Ford's "maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brentford," did Sir John Falstaff. Or, if he will persist in playing the part of a woman, let him bear in mind that to be unmanly is not necessarily to be womanly, and that it does not follow that one writes like a lady because he does *not* write like a gentleman.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Appleton's Cyclopædia of Drawing. Designed as a Text-book for the Mechanic, Architect, Engineer, and Surveyor. Comprising Geometrical Projection, Mechanical, Architectural, and Topographical Drawing, Perspective, and Isometry. Edited by W. E. Worthen. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1857.

Mr. Worthen has given us in this book a most judicious and complete compilation of the best works on the various branches of "practical" drawing,—having, with real thoughtfulness and knowledge of what was needed in a handbook, condensed all the most important rules and directions to be found in the works of MM. Le Brun and Armengaud on geometrical and mechanical drawing, Ferguson and Garbett on architectural, and Williams, Gillespie, Smith, and Frome, on topographical drawing.

It includes a very full chapter of geometrical definitions, a complete and minute description of all the implements of mechanical drawing, and solutions of all the useful problems of geometrical drawing,—a part of the work especially needed by practical mechanics, and hitherto to be found, so far as we know, only in the form of results in the pocket-books of tables, or in the lengthy and elaborate treatises of the heavy cyclopædias, or works specially devoted to the topic.

There is an admirably condensed treatise on the mechanical powers, containing all the problems of use in construction, with tables of the mechanical properties of materials. In mechanical drawing there are directions for the most complicated drawings, going up to the last improvements in the steam-engine. The same completeness of elementary instruction marks the section on architectural drawing, though in this department we should have liked a fuller and better-chosen series of examples, especially of domestic architecture,—an Italian villa planned by Mr. Upjohn being the only really tasteful and appropriate dwelling-house given. The designs by Downing, rarely much more than commodious residences with great neatness rather than artistic beauty, stand very well for that style of building which consults comfort and attains it, but it is a misuse of words to call them artistic. Picturesque they may be at times, but often the affectation of external style puts Downing's designs into the category of Gothic follies and Grecian villanies, in which the outside gives the lie to the inside,—emulating in wood the forms of stone, giving to cottages on whose roof snow will never lie three inches deep all the pitch a Swiss *châlet* would need. We are especially sorry to see a plate of Thomas's house in Fifth Avenue, New York,—the most absurd and ludicrous pile of building material which can be found on the avenue,—and to find such evidence of taste as is shown by the editor's commendation of it as "uniting richness and grandeur of effect," "admirably suited," etc. Mr. Worthen, however, generally abstains from much expression of opinion as to styles or the respective merits of works.

His examples of the steam-engine are nearly all from American models, and include the oscillating engines of the "Golden Gate," the last important advance in the construction of the marine engine; for, although the form of the oscillator has been known for years, it had never been applied to marine uses until the success of the "Golden Gate" proved its applicability to the heaviest engines. The examples of architectural details and ornaments are copious, and represent all styles with great fairness; but there is much confusion in the numbering of the plates, so that it is a problem at times to find the illustration desired.

The tinted illustrations, though answering their proposed purpose, are a disgrace to the art of lithotinting,—coarse, ineffective, and cheap. The publishers, we think, would have profited by a little more liberality in this respect.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED